DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 419 120 CE 076 392

TITLE	"What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Professional Development Newsletter. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Adult Education Linkage Services, Troy, PA.
SPONS AGENCY	Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	64p.; For previous reports and accompanying newsletter issues, see ED 395 131 and ED 395 098.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	What's the Buzz; v16 n1-5 Sep 1996-Jun 1997
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Basic Education; *Adult Educators; Adult Literacy; Basic Skills; Correctional Education; Educational Legislation; Federal Legislation; Information Dissemination; Information Sources; Labor Force Development; *Literacy Education; Nontraditional Education; *Professional Development; State Legislation; State Programs; Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS	*Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

Five issues of an adult basic education newsletter were developed and disseminated to more than 4,000 adult educators in Pennsylvania. The newsletters contained information appropriate to their professional development in a format and by a delivery method that would reach the large rural area of Pennsylvania and the large number of part-time adult educators throughout the state. The 5 issues contained the following: 28 articles relating to adult educational professional development information, resources, and meetings; 8 articles with information either from or concerning the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education; 7 articles relating to Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Program; 6 articles about recent adult education state or federal legislation; 6 articles dealing with electronic information resources in adult education; 4 articles describing local program activities; 3 articles concerning achievements of individual adult education students; and 2 articles relating to correction education. In addition, each issue carried a feature page titled "Newsletter Roundup" with 31 excerpts of relevant information from a wide range of newsletters; a page titled "People and Programs" which highlighted accomplishments of 26 individual adult educators and 21 programs; and "It's a Date," a page which lists a calendar of upcoming events in adult education. Three issues also included an insert section dealing primarily with activities of Project EQUAL (Educational Quality to Adult Literacy). (The five issues are included in this document.) (YLB)

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FINAL REPORT

Project # 99-7003

"What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Professional Development Newsletter

Project Director: David W. Fluke
Adult Education Linkage Services
Box 214, Troy, PA 16947

Project Year: 1996-1997

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Dissemination

ABSTRACT PAGE Project No: 99-7003

Grant Recipient: Adult Education Linkage Services

Box 214, Troy, PA 16947

(717) 596-3474

Program Name: "What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter.

Grant Allocation: $40,000

Project Period: July 1, 1996-June 30, 1997

Project Director: David W. Fluke

Project Purpose: To prepare an 8-page general adult basic education newsletter which contained information appropriate to the professional development of adult educators in Pennsylvania and to disseminate the newsletter bi-monthly (September to June) to as many persons as could be identified who are involved in adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania.

Project Outcomes:

The project prepared and disseminated a newsletter to more than 4,000 adult educators in Pennsylvania in the months of September and November, 1996 and January, March and June, 1997. The September, 1996 issue was 10 pages in length; the November, 1996 issue was 8 pages with a 4 page insert dealing with Project EQUAL; the January, 1997 issue was 8 pages; the March, 1997 issue was 10 pageswith a 2 page insert on Project EQUAL, and the final issue, June, 1997, was 9 pages with a 2 page Project EQUAL insert.

Content included 28 articles relating to adult education professional development information, resources and meetings; 8 articles with information either from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education or about their activities; 7 articles relating to Pennsylvania's Workforce Development program; 6 articles about recent adult education state or federal legislation; 6 articles dealing with electronic information resources in adult education; 4 articles describing local program activities; 3 articles concerning achievements of individual adult education students; and 2 articles relating to correction education.

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In addition, each issue carried a feature page titled "Newsletter Roundup" with excerpts of relevant information from a wide range of newsletters (31 articles); "People and Programs" which highlights accomplishments of individual adult educators and/or programs (26 people, 21 programs); and "It's a Date!" which gives a calendar of upcoming events in adult education.

The Project EQUAL (Educational Quality to Adult Literacy) inserts described some of the activities of the program in its third year. The inserts are prepared by Tana Reiff of Project AXIS.

Impact: Although it is difficult to evaluate the impact of the large amount of information contained in our newsletter disseminated among more than 4,000 readers, subjective and objective evaluation lead us to believe "What's the Buzz?" is being read and the information contained in the newsletter is relevant to our adult education reading audience.

More detailed information concerning impact is contained in the Evaluation section of the Final Report.

Product Developed: 5 copies of a newsletter.

Products Available From: Pennsylvania State Adult Literacy Resource Center, 11th floor, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

Project Continuation: We have received approval for preparation and dissemination of a professional development newsletter for Pennsylvania adult educators for 1997-98.

Future Implications: As the field of Adult Basic and Literacy Education becomes more complex, as additional sources of information, especially electronic, become available, and as adult educators in Pennsylvania become better trained in applying elements of their professional development, we feel the need for print information such as that in our newsletter, will assume an ever-increasingly important role in the professional development of all adult educators.

Conclusions/Recommendations: Our newsletter is meeting a need in the professional development of adult educators in Pennsylvania. We recommend continuation and expansion of the project.

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FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The purposes (objectives) of this project were to:

>Prepare an 8-page general adult basic education newsletter containing information such as in-service techniques, Section 353 projects and other information relevant and pertinent to adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania.
>Include as newsletter content information from a broad variety of sources.
>Prepare the newsletter in a format which encourages recipients to read the articles.
>Identify 3 experienced adult educators to serve as an editorial board to meet twice during the year and to review each months' copy prior to publication.
>Prepare, publish and distribute the newsletter in the months of September and November, 1996 and January, March, and June, 1997.
>Maintain a comprehensive mailing list up-to-date and free of duplication of up to 4,500 adult educators in Pennsylvania to receive the newsletter.

Time Frame

The project activities were conducted between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997.

Staff

Project Director and editor-in-chief was David W. Fluke, CEO of Adult Education Linkage Services, a non-profit, community-based organization based in Troy, PA which provides technical assistance to adult basic and literacy education programs.

Assistant Editor was Juliet B. Fluke.

Associate Editor was Tana Reiff of Project AXIS in Lancaster, PA who was responsible for newsletter layout and graphics.

Editorial Board members were: David W. Fluke, Tana Reiff, Ella Morin of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education and Priscilla Ferguson of the Tri-County OIC in Harrisburg.

Audience

The newsletter is designed to provide information to anyone involved in or interested in adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania.

Dissemination

Permanent copies of each issue are filed in both Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Resource Centers: Harrisburg, 11th floor, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333; Western Pennsylvania, 5347 William Flynn Highway, Rt. 8, Gibsonia, PA 15044.

BODY OF THE REPORT

The problem addressed by this project was to help meet the needs of adult educators in Pennsylvania for professional development information.

With the increased emphasis upon Staff Development and the increasing amount of information available which is appropriate to the professional development of adult educators, came a parallel need for dissemination.

Due to the large rural area of Pennsylvania and the large number of part time adult educators throughout the state, the traditional meeting/conference/workshop format reaches only a small portion of persons involved in working with adult learners (one project estimated less than 30% statewide).

Following our primary objective of dissemination of professional development information to adult educators throughout our state, our newsletter was mailed to more than 4,000 adult educators five times during the 1996-97 program year.

Contained in 45 pages (total) content in the five issues were:

28 articles relating to adult education professional development information, resources, and meetings.

8 articles with information either from or concerning the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

7 articles relating to Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Program.

6 articles about recent adult education state or federal legislation.

6 articles dealing with electronic information resources in adult education.

4 articles describing local program activities.

3 articles concerning achievements of individual adult education students.

2 articles relating to correction education.

In addition, each issue carried a feature page titled "Newsletter Roundup" with excerpts (31)of relevant information from a wide range of newsletters; a page titled "People and Programs" which highlighted accomplishments of individual adult educators and/or programs (26 people, 21 programs); and "It's a Date!"--a page which lists a calendar of upcoming events in adult education.

3 issues also included an insert section prepared by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education dealing primarily with the activities of Project EQUAL (Educational Quality to Adult Literacy).

OBJECTIVES MET

All objectives were met and, in some cases such as the number of pages, exceeded. Comments received from readers have been positive (see evaluation section).

EVALUATION

Evaluation was conducted using both objective and subjective techniques.

A mail-back evaluation form was sent to 100 readers during April, 1997. The forms were returned to Sherry Spencer of the Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program. Mrs. Spencer has no direct relationship with our newsletter. Included on the next page is a tabulation of the evaluations received. Although the return was small, 100% of respondents gave our newsletter top ratings in both information and format. All but one respondent indicated they read every issue of **The Buzz** and 100% said they find the information in the newsletter useful in their work.

In addition, we regularly receive correspondence and comments from readers:

"I find it full of useful information."

"Thanks for the great job you're doing."

"I recently attended a training seminar in literacy and they recommended I request your publication."

"Keep up the good work--we look forward to the next issue of 'What's the Buzz?'"

1996 - 1997 "WHAT's THE BUZZ?" READER SURVEY

On a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) how do you rate The Buzz?

5: 9; **4:** 6

How do you rate the information in The Buzz:

5: 9; **4:** 6

How do you rate the format of The Buzz?

5: 8; **4:** 7

Yes or No: Do you read every issue of The Buzz?

Yes: 14; **No:** 1

Do you find the information in The Buzz useful to you in your work?

Yes: 15

How could we improve "What's the Buzz?" to better meet your needs as an adult educator? (please use the other side for additional comments)

Please continue to feature and describe new materials, especially software designed for very low level students.

A column to assist programs on legal issues we are faced.

More editions.

Please include in "It's a Date": (1) Penn TESOL-East meeting dates-- one is scheduled for Oct. 1997. (2) Information regarding ESOL (more than 70% of our learners (Phila. area) are in these classes. Thanks-- keep up the good work. 5/5/97.

We need some attention to findings from the PAARN & PALPIN projects- such as practices that have yielded measureable results. I'd like more information on exemplary program practices.

"We have had many requests based on articles in 'What's the Buzz?'" (from ERIC)

"'What's the Buzz?' is a publication that this office finds very helpful and informative."

IMPROVEMENTS

The following improvements were suggested by the respondents:

>"Please continue to feature and describe new materials, especially software designed for very low level students."

>"A column (is needed) to assist programs on legal issues we are faced (with)."

>"More editions."

>"Please include in 'It's a Date' Penn TESOL meeting dates and information regarding ESOL. Thanks--keep up the good work."

>"We need some attention to findings from the PAARN and PALPIN projects--such as practices that have yielded measurable results. I'd like more information on exemplary program practices."

DISSEMINATION

Copies of this final report are available from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers. The final report, with all copies, is sent to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, 12th floor, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

Vol. 16, No. 1
SEPTEMBER 1996

WHAT'S the Buzz?
PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

Welcome to a New Year!

SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: ABLE's PC Database 3 PSCAL Forums 4 Building Communities 4 Correction Education 4 RSDCs Now PDCs 5 Legislative Update 5 AdvancE Online 6 COABE in Retrospect 6 DPW Funding 7 Letters 7 Newsletter Roundup 8 People & Programs 9 It's a Date 10

From the Bureau

OFF TO A GREAT START

by Cheryl Keenan, Director, Bureau of ABLE

Welcome back to another year of providing quality educational services to Pennsylvania's adult learners. Although many of you may not have taken the traditional summer break associated with public education, the summer months hopefully did provide you with some time for personal rest and recuperation. Coming back refreshed and rejuvenated will have you ready for the coming academic year. We at the Bureau have been preparing ourselves to assist you in the services you provide.

We can look back on a successful year in the implementation of program improvement efforts. During 1995-96, you met the objectives of the more than 60,000 adult learners enrolled in your programs. Current program year contracts have already been processed through the Department's approval system. Last year the Bureau consolidated the Section 322 of the federal Adult Education Act funds to one contract per agency. The 178 agencies re-

Continued on p.2

Workforce Development Teleconference Draws Picture of Pennsylvania's Future

Adult education is seeking to ensure itself a clear identity in the new matrix.

"Workforce Development is the most significant criterion for businesses who desire to relocate to Pennsylvania. Workforce Development is Economic Development."

With this introductory statement to the statewide Workforce Development Teleconference held June 20, adult educators got their first glimpse of Pennsylvania's new Workforce Development priorities, which many feel will be the basis for education services to adults beginning in the near future. Presentations from representatives of the state Departments of Labor and Industry, Commerce, Public Welfare, and Education left little doubt that we had better get with coordination and collaboration among services and programs or, as one adult educator said, "We're in deep trouble!"

A very clear message was presented by Sherri Heller, Deputy Secretary for Income Maintenance, Department of Public Welfare. Dr. Heller emphasized that the Commonwealth's new welfare regulations, put into practice on June 17, reflect not only new requirements for maintaining cash payments through the public assistance programs but also stress implementation of training, education, and job placement activities. Previously, Public Welfare (like ABLE) provided priority services to the most in need (lowest-literate, most unemployable, etc.). New guidelines in welfare reform provide services first to adults most easily trained or placed—those Dr. Heller referred to as the "most job-ready welfare recipients."

Throughout the teleconference there was little specific reference to adult basic and literacy education and what role, if any, it will play in Pennsylvania's Workforce Development.

Coordination of local services. From Governor Ridge's recommendation for Individual Learning Accounts (ILA's), to "one-stop centers" for employers, job seekers, adult learners, and other adults, to the Department of Commerce's "Regional Skill Centers," the block grant concept was ever present. Despite the lack of specific implementation information, a representative of the Governor's Office said, "We will put beginnings of integrated and coordinated processes of workforce development in place in Pennsylvania by July 1, 1997," regardless of how the feds move or not move in adopting funding legislation.

Throughout the teleconference there was little specific reference to adult basic and literacy education and what role, if any, it will play in Pennsylvania's Workforce Development. The representative of the Department of Education on the panel, Dr. Mary Ann Nobers, Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, noted initiatives such as the School-To-Work program as being an ex-

Continued on p.3

the Buzz
SEPTEMBER 1996

BUREAU, from p.1

ceiving these funds have benefited from the timely processing of applications and the transition to a monthly payment schedule. Over 140 agencies receive allocations from Act 143, the state Adult Literacy Act, to provide services ranging from one-on-one adult literacy tutoring to GED preparation. The Pennsylvania Literacy Corps, a higher education service learning program that provides community adult basic and literacy education through a corps of well-trained college student volunteers, became a part of ABLE this past year.

Continuing its efforts to ensure program improvement, the Bureau revised the Program Guidelines and streamlined the application process. By lifting excessive and prescriptive rules, the Bureau ensures that agencies can be flexible and responsive in meeting the needs of their learners and their program objectives. The Bureau is also instituting mechanized data collection and reporting and providing ongoing training and technical assistance, in cooperation with the Center for Literacy. Data collected can be used for continuous program improvement. Another activity based upon the Indicators of Program Quality is onsite monitoring conducted by Bureau staff. Through this process, we are able to identify elements for improvement and determine areas for training and development.

Professional development continues as a priority. Training in techniques for teaching adults with learning differences and learning from practice through practitioner inquiry and action research will be provided. This past year, a professional development workgroup made up of practitioners and administrators assisted the Bureau in developing guidelines and policies for a reorganized professional development system. The priorities for a regional professional development system assure that professional development opportunities provided to adult education practitioners result in adult learners enhancing their basic skills and competencies. Activities for the coming year include a core of topics for practitioner training and site-based technical assistance based upon exemplary practices and programs. Other objectives include assessing local needs and developing program improvement plans. This year, the six regional Professional Development Centers will provide training opportunities for providers across the Commonwealth, increasing participation in a variety of professional development activities. A project will review and collect training materials to be used in five content areas, determined through an assessment of training needs. Practitioner training began with three Summer Institutes that provided learning opportunities in technology, new teacher orientation, and techniques for collaborative learning in the classroom. That training will continue through the year.

Continuing the technology initiatives begun in the ALTIN project last year, the ABLENet project will network and train across the Commonwealth by expanding the number of practitioners involved in each of the six regions. Another project will examine the reporting of student data; another will research and develop a list of competencies for adult learners as workers, family members, and citizens.

Year Three of Project EQuAL will continue to provide technical assistance to the Bureau, leading to improving the quality of services provided by your programs through the use of data, and to develop performance standards for ABLE programs. The 20 pilot sites involved in EQuAL project activities will expand their efforts and assist in bringing the goals of the project statewide.

The projects undertaken will assist you in providing instructional programs that lead to adult learners' achieving their goals and reaching their full potential. With your efforts we can assure that there will be continuous improvement in all programs and that the learners meet their goals and objectives. On behalf of the Bureau staff, I welcome you back to another year in adult education and look forward to our working together. Have a good and successful year! ❖

WHAT'S the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1996-97 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Associate Editor: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Ella Morin, Priscilla Ferguson, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Administrators, Take Note

Cheryl Keenan, Director of the Bureau of ABLE, will be talking with program administrators and directors this fall at a series of meetings arranged through the regional Professional Development Centers (PDCs). Cheryl will be talking about the direction for adult education in the coming years, focusing on the elements of program improvement begun under Project EQUAL.

With changes that have their beginnings at the federal level and the awareness nationwide that adult learners are in need of basic skills education in order to be competitive and to be full and contributing members of society, it is important that all program administrators understand their role in reforming adult education services by increasing benefits to learners and using program evaluation to continuously improve programs. Cheryl will provide information about current initiatives and future state requirements for adult education programs. Notification for the meetings will be made through the regional PDC. Program administrators' attendance is required. ❖

TELECONFERENCE, *from p.1*

ample of PDE input to the Workforce Development concept.

Focus groups. Follow-up input to ideas raised during the teleconference was initiated in a series of "Focus Groups" held throughout the summer and coordinated by the Iacocca Institute based at Lehigh University, Bethlehem. Using the project title "AGILE PA" the Institute sent facilitators to Allentown, Altoona, Erie, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, the Scranton area, and the State College area. They met with groups of from ten to 19 persons representing a wide range of groups, including ABLE providers and students. Discussion centered around the objectives, status, and needs of workforce development in Pennsylvania and what the "customers" (employers and employees) want from a statewide system of workforce development.

The following conclusions seemed to find general acceptance among the eight focus groups:

- Individual adults should decide what they want. It is the individual's responsibility to solve his or her own problems and achieve success. The perspective should not be "What can the system do for me?"
- Initial assessment for adults entering the system should provide a "reality check" which includes realistic information about the client and the workforce.
- There needs to be a basic system of services in place to include basic literacy programs and an exhaustive, systematized list of services.
- Retention and the provision of information about adults in the system are important. This information should include completion rates, what employment occurred because of training, follow-up to observe long-term success or failure, customer satisfaction with the job, training received, and the overall program, and the number of adults who return for services or go back on public assistance.
- The system should:
  Be user-friendly.
  Be based on trust.
  Be market driven.
  Be based upon social contracts.
  Have available better labor market information.
  Be characterized by collaboration and cooperation among service providers.
  Eliminate busy work mandated by bureaucracy.
  Establish uniformity of training and information across the state.
- Lifelong learning should be emphasized at all stages of the process.

Problems identified by the focus groups included the lack of trust among stakeholders and between stakeholders and "Harrisburg." Some concern was expressed as to whether the system would treat rural, suburban, and urban programs equally fairly. Rural providers expressed a concern that most of the money will go to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. One focus group made the point that the new "instant job placement" concept of the welfare system is antithesis to the concept of lifelong learning.

We in Pennsylvania ABLE have our work cut out for us if we are not to be "left behind" as service providers are identified for participation in "substate structures" (a new "Buzz" word) in what teleconference presenters referred to a "a single, seamless enterprise system."

For more information about Pennsylvania Workforce Development and how you can have input, contact the Department of Labor and Industry, 1721 Labor and Industry Building, 7th and Forster Sts., Harrisburg, PA 17120. ❖

ABLE'S PC DATABASE: THE FIRST YEAR

by Bill Murphy, Research and Evaluation Chief, Bureau of ABLE

This month, instead of thousands of copy 3's of the student intake form, the Research Section of ABLE is receiving floppy disks from individual agencies. About 100 agencies are submitting disks with their student, tutor, and staff data. This year, we have cut the number of scannable "bubble" forms by more than 60%. We have received disks with viruses and experienced some problems with the programs, but we can safely say the bubble form era is on the way out. Next year we shall add 29 new agencies. We are also exploring means to include those agencies which lack the capability of converting to the automated data reporting system.

The PC database offers new organizational possibilities. For the past two years, we have been collecting student data by "learning environments." Otherwise known as classes or tutor sites, these student groupings will enable programs to examine student participation and performance by the instructional situations in which they are learning. As programs begin to analyze and evaluate their performance, these categories will help determine how best to retain and educate adult students at various levels of instruction. The potential is only beginning but one immediate advantage is already occurring. Continuing students will not have to be re-enrolled, because they are retained in the computer. The agency can create new classes or sites and then place the new and continuing students into the appropriate class/site.

If your agency has not yet committed to use the database, you may still sign up by informing the Bureau at (717) 787-8648. Training sessions will be conducted in September. Participants should be familiar with the computer keyboard and the mouse. They also should have sufficient clerical time available to do data entry. The scannable form appears easier because the burden of completion all too often falls to the teacher. With the PC database, that burden is shared with the clerical person who enters the data. We also recommend that agencies collaborate on a combined database system. Contracted programs can be maintained separately on the same computer. Because data entry staff require time to learn the system, database consolidation will ensure continuity and correct entry. ❖

PSCAL 1995-96 FORUMS A SUCCESS

The Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) is a nonprofit, statewide organization supported by funds from the private sector. One of its organizational purposes is to foster leadership in adult literacy by serving as a forum for the exchange of ideas.

Coalition membership consists of representatives of Pennsylvania adult literacy provider organizations and other organizations, individuals, and agencies within public and private sectors who support or are affected by literacy activities.

In 1995 the Coalition embarked on an ambitious program of public forums dealing with topics of concern in the literacy field and having impact upon various segments of Pennsylvania's population.

The first forum, held September 21, 1995, addressed Economic Development and Literacy in which a panel of presenters discussed local and state perspectives on economic development trends in Pennsylvania, innovative ways higher education and academia have responded to training needs predicated by a global economy, and how manufacturing, in particular, has evolved from a process driven by "brawn power" to one of "brain power."

The second forum, in December, dealt with the timely issue of Welfare Reform and Literacy and presenters attempted to clarify the potential and actual impacts of welfare reform on literacy efforts and programs and to help literacy providers and supporters move toward positive outcomes during the period of significant change in welfare policy and procedure.

The third and final forum of 1995-96 addressed the characteristics of Family and Literacy programs in a variety of settings including Head Start, Even Start, Family Centers, and ESL programs.

The first forum of 1996-97 dealt with "The Needs of the ESL Student." A white paper covering the highlights of each forum is prepared and made available without charge. Each Professional Development Center will have a copy and additional copies will be available from PSCAL's president, Joanne Shane Plummer, at (717) 238-9026.

PSCAL Forums are free and all BUZZ readers are invited to attend. Forum dates for the future are: December 5, 1996, and March 6 and June 5, 1997. ❖

Building Communities for Learning Grants Available

During 1995-96 The Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) established four community-based planning sites for their Building Communities for Learning Project.

The community-based planning groups involve adult literacy stakeholders representing both agencies and organizations that provide educational, employment, economic, and health services to potential or current adult learners. Their purpose is to develop a "seamless" comprehensive and coordinated learner-centered system of services that promotes and supports adult learning. At the same time, the planning process promotes interagency collaboration resulting in **maximized use of local resources and services.**

Funding available. **In 1996-97 PSCAL will award $2,000 start-up grants to four communities that wish to support the establishment of community-based planning groups and the development of a community-based planning process. In addition, training and individualized technical assistance and mentoring will be made available to the groups selected. Four additional communities will be invited to participate in the project and will receive community-based planning training materials and assistance.**

Applications for funding are now available and are due October 11, 1996. **For applications and more information contact Dr. Sheila Sherow, 349 Cricklewood Dr., State College, PA 16803 (814) 235-1130.** ❖

CORRECTION EDUCATION SEES CHANGES

by William Mader, Director, Bureau of Correction Education Pennsylvania Department of Education

Nineteen ninety-five was a year of significant change in the state's correctional system. In January, a special session of the legislature was called by Governor Ridge. One of the areas of concentration of this session was the juvenile justice system. This session was the result of the Governor's concern for public safety, and his commitment to attack Pennsylvania's crime problem. After weeks of interaction, several new laws that are intended to reduce the number of violent criminal acts committed by juveniles and take violent juveniles off the street were passed.

By the end of 1995, the population in the State Correctional Institutions exceeded 32,500. The increase of over 4,000 inmates during the past year was the largest increase in the decade of the '90s. The current State Correctional Institution occupancy rate exceeds 150% of capacity.

The main emphasis of the Bureau of Correction Education's programs continues to be instruction in the basic skills areas of reading, language arts, and math. The objective for the 2,500 inmates who participate in these programs is to increase their performance level 1.5 months for each month in the program. The installation of basic skills laboratories in the five new institutions that have opened in the past 18 months has greatly increased our ability to serve inmates/students at their individual performance levels. The management system of these programs is designed to recommend specific strategies based on the results of pretests, which determine the student's current functioning level.

The Bureau of Correction Education's GED program

continues to be very effective. During the 1995 calendar year, the GED exam was given at 22 SCIs; 2,033 inmates took the exam and 1,362 inmates successfully completed it. This is an overall success rate of approximately 67%. This rate may be slightly lower than that of the general population, but when one considers the initial functioning level and prior failure rate of inmates, a 67% passing rate is a significant achievement..❖

RSDCs ARE NOW PDCs

Since 1992, Pennsylvania ABLE's Regional Staff Development Centers have filled an essential role in the professional development of adult educators throughout the state. Now, the regional professional development system has been reorganized into six **Professional Development Centers** (PDCs) which will support a statewide professional development system for Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy educators.

In announcing the reorganized Centers Cheryl Keenan, Director of the ABLE Bureau, also announced the adoption of Guiding Principles for the Professional Development of Adult Education Practitioners in Pennsylvania. The Principles were developed by a committee of practitioners and professional development experts and outline the philosophy, mission, and principles behind the improvement of the quality and character of professional development experiences provided for and by literacy educators in our state.

PDC staff include: (front row) Paula Smith, Carol Molek, and Brian Frey (SCPDC); Bootsie Barbour (NWPDC); (back row) Gail Leightley (CNEPDC); Rose Brandt and Diane Inverso (PHLPDC); Sandy Strunk (SEPDC); and Karen Mundie (SWPDC).

The six PDCs are:

Northwest PDC: Director, Richard Gacka; Coordinator, Bootsie Barbour; (814) 866-3775 ext. 223, NorthWPDC@aol.com

Southwest PDC: Director, Donald Block; Coordinator, Rachel Zilcosky; (412) 661-READ, SWPDC2@aol.com

South-Central PDC: Director, Carol Molek; Coordinator; Brian Frey; (717) 248-4942; scpdc@pennet.net

Central-Northeast PDC: Director, Edith Gordon; Coordinator, Gail Leightley; (814) 359-3069; CNEPDC@aol.com

Southeast PDC: Coordinator, Sandra Strunk; (717) 270-2935; SEPDC1@aol.com

Philadelphia PDC: Director, Rose Brandt; Coordinator, Diane Inverso; (215) 685-6602, PHLPDC@aol.com

The Professional Development Centers are coordinated by Helen Hall, Staff Development Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, (717) 787-5532.❖

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

When we left you last May, lots of things were happening in state and federal legislation which pertain to adult basic and literacy education. We asked Legislative Committee co-chairs of Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), Jean Henry and JoAnn Weinberger, for an update.

State legislation. The final approporiation for FY (fiscal year) '96–'97 included:

- $8.525 million for Act 143 Adult literacy. This is no increase since the 3% increase requested by Governor Ridge was cut in a final conference committee.
- $33.333 million for the technology initiative. $1.7 million for basic skill and job training for clients receiving Aid for Dependent Children. This will be funded under Community Conservation and Youth Employment.
- $250 million for individual learning accounts for employed persons.

Federal legislation. The Workforce Education Block Grant legislation is all but dead due to deadlocks over issues other than adult education. A stripped-down version of the bill may be introduced this fall. As the adult education portion of the bill was not the controversial portion, we are in a good position to achieve what we had worked for during this past year, which was to protect adult education as a separate program rather than as part of a job-training bill.

Funding for the National Institute for Literacy was cut and there is a good possibility the Prison Literacy Program, VISTA Literacy Corps, the Library Literacy Program, and the national programs of the U.S. Department of Education will not be funded in the House. There is a possibility some funding for some of these programs (especially the Prison Literacy program) will be provided in the Senate bill. The basic grants to the states would be maintained at the same level as FY'96 ($250 million).

Jean and JoAnn suggest the fall of this election year might be a good time to invite legislators to visit your adult programs in order to put a face on adult education. We should also remind politicians and the public that adult education is a separate, but important part of the education continuum, and that it is a vitally important step towards self-sufficiency.❖

Editor's note: *Thanks to the PAACE Legislative Committee co-chairs for this information and to PAACE for their continual monitoring of adult education legislation.*

ADVANCE TO LUIS!

by Cheryl Harmon, AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center

Some exciting things have happened during the last year! First, the AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center collection was moved into larger quarters at PDE. The move has enabled us to increase our collection area and to provide small work areas for individuals using the collection on-site. Practitioners and tutors can examine resources and make selections to take with them.

Second, the collection is now available through LUIS, the online database of the State Library. Adult basic and literacy education resources can be searched from remote locations on either the Internet or through Dial Access! This summer, we asked several local program staff and administrators to try it. They were given various brochures on using LUIS and a few "coaching" tips from AdvancE, then were asked to complete a few searches. After a little practice in getting to LUIS through the Internet, participants were successful in locating citations by searching keywords, titles, and authors.

Now you can locate resources for your professional development, for student instruction, or to review exemplary adult basic and literacy education projects. If you have access to a computer, a modem, and communications software, or access to the Internet, and you want to search LUIS, contact me at 1-800-992-2283 or at harmon@shrsys.hslc.org. Information on how to search the database will be mailed to you.

We encourage you to visit AdvancE at 333 Market St., 11th Fl., Harrisburg, while you're in the area. The Resource Center is open from 8-5, Monday through Friday.❖

COABE SHOWS OFF PITTSBURGH AND PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION

COABE '96 was a spectacular kick-off event for summer 1996. The May National Conference of the Commission for Adult Basic Education (an affiliate of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education—AAACE) brought more than 1,000 adult educators, including 400 Pennsylvanians, to Pittsburgh.

Conference chair **Judith Aaronson,** who heads up the Literacy Program for Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh, received recognition from her Pennsylvania peers by being named 1996 Adult Educator of the Year and her substantial efforts in making the Conference "come together" received accolades from adult educators throughout the country.

AmeriCorps Volunteers were much in evidence as they helped with the seemingly thousands of details necessary to make a national conference of this scope run smoothly. Special mention should be made of **Rana Taylor,** tutor manager for Goodwill Industries Literacy Program in Pittsburgh, for her months of riding herd on registration information. **Ron Fronzaglio,** adult educator with the Allegheny IU in Pittsburgh demonstrated his singing talents, and a boat cruise was included in "distractions" available to conference goers. The Conference Book prepared by **Tana Reiff** of Lancaster received many words of praise from COABE members. A real feather in the professional cap of the PAACE, which sponsored the conference.❖

They will be missed ...

Clair E. Troy, Pennsylvania Adult Education Pioneer

We regret to announce the passing of Clair E. Troy, who for many years with his wife Marion has coordinated the registration for the Adult Education Midwinter Conference.

Clair was a charter member of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) and spent many of his 84 years in professional and community service.

He was formerly a coordinator in Adult Basic Education for the Pennsylvania Department of Education and prior to employment with PDE was a high school teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent of schools in the Upper Dauphin Area Schools.

Clair Troy's efforts and energies on behalf of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania gained him many friends and admirers among his adult educator colleagues.❖

Guido J. Ruzzier, Teacher and Opera Lover

One of his colleagues described Guido Ruzzier as "an outstanding example of enthusiasm and motivation in the classroom. He will be sorely missed not only in our program, but throughout the area as well."

Guido J. Ruzzier was born in Italy and taught the Italian language at Indiana University (Indiana), Italian opera at Edinboro University, math at Gannon University, and language at Alliance College before joining the Erie School District Adult Learning Center as a full-time math instructor.

In addition to his work in the classroom, Guy hosted math and algebra TV programs for the Erie Schools and was a popular radio personality, producing and hosting a program on opera. In the March 1996 issue of The Buzz we reviewed a Video Instructional Course for GED Math Teachers developed by Mr. Ruzzier to help adult education math teachers develop teaching strategies in mathematics.

Mr. Ruzzier died at the age of 64 and spent nearly half of his years as an adult educator.❖

Federal Policy Updates from the National Institute for Literacy are available free if your name is on the NIFL mailing list. To have your name included and to receive information updates on federal legislation and policy call (202) 632-1600 and select option 6.❖

NEED FUNDS? TRY WELFARE...

During the past few months the "new directions" of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in regard to services for adults have begun to take shape and some specific priorities are already being identified.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare seems to be the lead agency in putting new programs on the street and ABLE programs would be well advised to look into ways their services can be coordinated with DPW programs to establish articulated service delivery to all adults, including adult learners.

DPW recently sent out a Request for Proposals which, although the deadline is now past (August 19, 1996), is representative of what we are probably going to experience in the months to come.

Rapid attachment to the Workforce and Job Retention Program. In the materials accompanying the RFP, the explanation of the "Rapid Attachment/Job Retention Program" points up the new priority of the Welfare Department to service what are described as the "most employable" (high school or GED graduates and adults with work histories) who are receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and/or General Assistance (GA).

One statement in the RFP says, "The goal is to match welfare clients with job vacancies by providing four weeks of job readiness/preparation training followed by four weeks of job search workshops and job development. **An additional four weeks of remedial education may be offered to participants assessed by the contractor as in need of such services** [our emphasis].

And DPW will *pay* for "participation" (up to $800 per client), "Job Placement" (up to $400 per client), and "Job Retention for 90 Days" (up to $400).

It's not too late. Although the deadline for program applications has passed, the provision of some services may still be up for grabs. The RFP, in addition to job readiness, job search, job placement, etc., notes a "key element": literacy, basic education remediation, and skills brush-up training. Sound familiar?

We suggest two courses of action to ABLE programs looking to develop program services geared for the "new" coordination format: 1) contact the DPW office in your area and express your desire to work along with service providers, and 2) get on the mailing list of DPW so you won't be left out when other RFPs begin to show up.

Contact the Pa. Dept. of Public Welfare at P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675, (717) 787-7585.❖

Get Your Adult Students Online

Does your adult education curriculum include training on using the Internet? Do you teach adult students how to use the public library? Combine the two and use the capability nearly all libraries in Pennsylvania have to use the Internet at the public library. The challenge is to develop ways to teach your adult students to use this valuable service.❖

Our Readers Write

Diverse Sexualities and Family Literacy

The January 1996 issue of WHAT'S THE BUZZ? provided an excellent piece on "Multicultural Books About Families." However, the author omitted a significant family unit, namely gay and lesbian families.

It is widely recognized today that families are not uniform. One aspect of that variety includes sexual diversity. Arguably, gay men and women make up between 2%–10% of the population, which has significance for adult education efforts, including literacy. Gay men and women build families in as varied ways as do non-gay men and women. For example, through domestic partnerships, as single parents, through adoption and foster care.

How does gay family variability affect adult educators? Those of us who believe that adult education must be linked to social responsibility choose to be sensitive to the self-definitions and experiences of our learners. This is especially important since gay individuals—and those assumed to be gay—are often marginalized by silence and violence in our society, as a result of homophobia ...

... What can we do? For a start educate ourselves on gay issues. Secondly, introduce gay- and lesbian-themed texts into our work, regardless of the sexual orientation of our learners ... And, since sexual orientation crosses ethnic lines, a number of books portray Latino/Latina, Afro-American, and Asian themes. For straightforward—but not straight-content—reading, *The Family Heart, Rubyfruit Jungle, Annie on My Mind, The Persian Boy,* and *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* are just a few that might be incorporated into teaching materials. Some organizations and commercial ventures provide extensive reading lists. I would be happy to dialog with those who are interested in obtaining bibliographies. I ran be reached by email at rjh130@psuvm.psu.edu.

Robert J. Hill
Adult Education Program, Penn State University, Harrisburg

Students Getting Younger

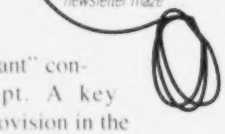
Recently I have noticed an increase of younger age students in my GED classes (17 to 18 year olds). When I questioned them concerning their attendance in the class the almost universal answer is to escape the drugs in the high schools. I would certainly appreciate some information on this subject. Is this a trend? Will it have a direct effect on the level of difficulty, etc.? With the inclusion of young students in the class, my older adult students are having a slightly more difficult time keeping up. I've had to, in some cases, set up a separate learning schedule. Any information you might have along these lines would be most appreciated.

Bob Lewis
Delaware County Community College

Editor's note: How about it? Is this a trend with your classes? How do you approach it? Let us know at Box 214, Troy, PA 16947

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze



➸ Student involvement in adult basic and literacy education is built around the philosophy that adult students should be at the center of their own learning. The March/April 1996 issue of ***The Ladder***, the newsletter of Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN), featured an extensive article titled "Student Involvement: Benefits and Barriers for Learners and Programs," by Diane J. Knich, Regional Literacy Coordinator for the Washington, DC Public Library. Knich feels some literacy practitioners "may be going overboard to compensate for neglecting student's real-life literacy needs in the past." She gives an overview of student involvement and reviews some of the benefits to students and programs. The same issue has an article which suggests many adult educators need to take more time for themselves and that, although technology is supposed to make life easier, "it also somehow succeeds in squeezing five more activities into every day." The address for PLAN is 1528 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003.

➸ Professionalism in adult education in Pennsylvania centers around the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE). In the Summer, 1996 issue of ***PAACE News*** the lead article brings us news of the passage of Act 42, the Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act. This legislation was strongly backed by PAACE in response to what seems a certainty from federal adult education legislation for some type of "block grant" concept. A key provision in the Act is the establishment of an Interagency Coordinating Council to develop coordination among the five state government departments and 16 funding streams dealing with adult education in the Commonwealth.

Other articles in that issue included a recap of the COABE conference, an insert by Gordon Godbey on Dr. Benjamin W. Barkas, a "Pennsylvania Pioneer of Adult Education," and information on PAACE Program Divisions. *PAACE News* is free to PAACE members. For membership information write Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3796.

➸ ***GED Items*** is a free newsletter from the GED Testing Service. The March/April 1996 issue compared the External Diploma Program (EDP) and competencies identified by the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). Entitled "EDP's Place in a Block Grant World," the article describes the competency-based performance assessment some organizations are using for awarding a traditional high school diploma. This assessment correlates with the SCANS foundation competencies. For a complete list of EDP/SCANS competencies send $5 to Barbara Willt, 13122 Memory Ln., Fairfax, VA 22033. To subscribe to *GED Items*, write the American Council on Education, GEDTS, One Dupont Circle, NW, Ste. 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

➸ Special-needs adults are receiving more attention from adult educators as their numbers increase in traditional adult basic and literacy education programs. A newsletter with information relevant to special-needs adult learners is ***Learning disAbilities***, from Dr. Richard Cooper's Center for Alternative Learning. The May 1996 issue reviews Dr. Cooper's activities with the Statewide Staff Development Project dealing with learning differences training. The project involved more than 700 adult educators in Pennsylvania at 50 training sessions. Another topic in the May issue deals with poor handwriting resulting from poor motor control in some adult learners. According to Dr. Cooper, "Word processors or computers with word processing programs can be an enormous help for individuals with poor handwriting." A subscription to ***Learning disAbilities*** is $10 to PO Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

➸ Inquiry maps are the topic of discussion in an article from the May/June 1996 issue of ***all write news***, a newsletter supported by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Inquiry maps are simple, project-based, participatory learning processes which originate from an adult student's interest in a topic, followed by research using interviews, surveys, traditional library research and possibly the World Wide Web. The map culminates with a written presentation of the research findings. The address for *all write news* is 989 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.

➸ If you're one of our English as a Second Language (ESL) readers, now's the time to subscribe to what we consider an excellent periodical in the field: *Hands-on English*. Each issue is full of useful information about materials, techniques, and happenings in the ESL field. Subscription rate for teachers is $21 to P.O. Box 526, Crete, NE 68333.

➸ An extensive review of Pennsylvania's ALTIN (Adult Literacy Technology Innovation Network) project appears in the Spring 1996 issue of ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin.*** ALTIN is designed to provide the technical training and educational strategies literacy providers need to implement technology into adult education classrooms and to enable adult educators to use these skills in a broad range of professional development activities. ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin*** is free from the U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Div. of Adult Education and Literacy, 600 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202-8973. ❖

People & Programs

◆ At its 41st Annual Convention held last Spring in New Orleans, the International Reading Association (IRA) recognized 28 local IRA Councils nationwide for their programs, community service, literacy projects, communication pieces, and meeting membership goals. Three of the 28 Honor Councils are from Pennsylvania: The **Delaware Valley Reading Association,** the **Erie Reading Council,** and the **Luzerne County Reading Council.** A reminder: the IRA has an Adult Literacy Special Interest Group. For more information contact Dolores Perin, Teachers College, Columbia University, Box 70, New York, NY 10027.

◆ The **Erie Adult Learning Center** is one of ten sites nationally selected to field-test the "Science + Literacy for Health Drug Education Partnership Program," developed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The program is designed to provide current science information about health care issues to low-level reading adults. **Joe Mando** is director of the Center.

Joe Mando

◆ The **Development Center for Adults West Branch Technology Center** in Lock Haven has been selected as the technology training center for statewide ABLE-Net training activities under the aegis of the ABLE Bureau. The Center is part of the Central IU #10 adult education program directed by **Edie Gordon** and is staffed by **Deb Burrows, Linda Hinman, Kay Lynn Hamilton,** and **Jim Heiney.** They can be reached at (717) 893-4038.

◆ Welcome to **Pat Gaul,** now **president** of Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth, a program division of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE). Pat is Director of the **Delaware County Literacy Council** in Chester and replaces former TLC president **Linda Herr,** who is moving to Kentucky. Incoming first vice-president is **Diana Statsman,** Director of the Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (SCOLA). TLC trained more than 300 volunteer tutors in '95-'96.

◆ We are continually amazed and heartened by the creativity and initiative shown by some programs to generate funds for adult basic and literacy education services to adult learners. The **Juniata County Library Literacy Program** is primarily funded through a Community Services Block Grant. Even with this support and a successful fundraising campaign, Literacy Coordinator **Karen Thome** expresses the thinking of many small programs with her comment that "Literacy is still a shoestring operation."

◆ The **Abington Free Library Adult Literacy Program** is publishing a booklet of original scripts developed as part of its Literacy Live program, which involves adult learners as performers and writers in various situations. **Marlyn Cohen,** program supervisor, tells us the booklets should be available this fall. The Abington program is also involved in a Family Literacy program initiated last spring which involves preschoolers and caregivers and using six volunteers with prior teaching experience to carry out preschool activities with the 14 participants. Chairpersons of the two programs are **Ethel Wertheim,** Literacy Live, and **Annabelle Folk,** Family Literacy. The address of the program is 1030 Old York Rd., Abington, PA 19001.

◆ The **Center for Literacy** (CFL) has released the new edition of its *Adult Literacy Handbook for Students and Tutors.* The Handbook was originally published in 1984 and has met with great success among adult educators throughout the U.S and in Canada. Author **Anita Pomerance** says the new edition is more user-friendly and the wording has been revised to achieve a more direct, plain style, with specific everyday examples. "The Handbook is meant to be used equally by student and tutor and we have revised the latest edition with this in mind," she explains.

The Handbook is a guide to the learner-centered approach to tutoring and stresses the importance of meeting students' goals and identifying and considering their interests. Copies are available from CFL, 636 S. 48th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143. Price is $11, including shipping and handling.

JoAnn Weinberger

Also, congratulations to CFL Executive Director **JoAnn Weinberger** who, along with **Yvette Walls** and **Jane McGovern,** recently completed their tenth year with the organization.

◆ **Dr. Eunice (Nickie) Askov,** Director of Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, is a candidate for the office of President of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). Dr. Askov is Director of the AAACE's Commission of Business, Industry and Labor. The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) is a state affiliate of AAACE.❖

the Buzz
SEPTEMBER 1996

SEPTEMBER 1996

19 Pennsylvania State Data Center Sixth Annual Users Conference. Contact: Diane Shoop, (717) 948-6336.

23 Inter-region professional development, Gibsonia. NW and SW Professional Development Centers. Contacts: Bootsie Barbour or Rachel Zilcosky.

25 NAASLN Pre-Conference. Discussion of resolutions, position papers, and issues of concern to adult educators.

25–27 National Rural Families 16th Annual Conference, Manhattan, KS; "Changing Realities of Working With Children and Families." Contact: National Rural Families Conference, Kansas State University; 131 College Court Bldg., Manhattan, KS 66506-6015.

26 National Symposium on Accommodating Adults with Disabilities in Adult Education, in conjunction with the NAASLN Conference.

26-28 National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NASSLN) Sixth Annual National Conference, New Orleans. A must for adult educators who wish to learn more about methods research, instruction, technology, and all phases of adult basic and literacy education for adults with special needs. Contact Dr. Richard Cooper, (610) 525-8336.

The Pennsylvania ABLE Administrators Handbook, 1996 Edition, is now available through AdvancE.

It's a Date!

OCTOBER 1996

8 PAACE Board Meeting, Harrisburg State Hospital.

10 RECONCILIATION OF CASH ON HAND QUARTERLY REPORT DUE TO STATE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE.

24-26 The Eastern Adult, Continuing, and Distance Education Research Conference, Scanticon Conference Center, Penn State. Theory, research, policy, and practice in a forum for practitioners, Policy makers, and researchers across the three separate yet interrelated fields of Adult Education, Continuing Education, and Distance Education. Contact: Dr. Peter S. Cookson, Penn State, Charlotte Building, 403 S. Allen St., Ste. 206, University Park, PA 16801-5202, (814) 863-3781, ciq@psuvm.psc.edu.

27-29 Networking for Adult Student Success. A national conference on recruiting and serving adult students, New York, NY. Contact: The College Board Office of Adult Learning Services, (212) 713-8101.

30–Nov. 1 Marketing and Delivering Special Program Options to Adult Students, Washington, DC. Contact: Office of Adult Learning Services (212) 713-8101.

30–Nov. 2 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) 1996 Conference, Charlotte, NC. Contact: AAACE, 1200 19th St., NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036.

31-Nov. 2 18th International Conference on Learning Disabilities, Nashville, TN. Contact: Council for Learning Disabilities, PO Box 40303, Overland Park, KS 66204.

NOVEMBER 1996

7–8 Workforce Development: A Common Goal for Business and Higher Education, Chicago. Contact: Office for Adult Learning Services (212) 713-8101.

12 PAACE Board Meeting

13 Videoconference: Adult Learning in America: Why and How Adults Go Back to School. Contact: PBS (800) 257-2578 or your PDC for downlink sites.

14–15 Technology and the Adult Student: Implications for Adult Learning Now and In the Future, Washington, DC. Office for Adult Learning Services (212) 713-8101.

22–24 The Association for Community-Based Education (ACBE) Annual Conference, Monterey, CA. Contact: ACBE, 1805 Florida Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009.

February 5–7, 1997

The Pennsylvania Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Theme: "The Challenges of Change: Keeping Pace." Call for Papers in the fall issue of *PAACE News*. Prospective presenters contact Dr. David Dentler, Center for Continuing Education, Elizabethtown College, 1 Alpha Dr., Elizabethtown, PA 17022, (717) 361-1286; fax (717) 361-1487.

THE BUZZ IS BACK!

We are pleased to be able to return with this newsletter for 1996-97. As was the case last year, we will publish five issues starting with this September 1996 issue. The next issue will be sent to you about the 15th of November and subsequent issues on the 15th of January, March, and June, 1997.

In this issue we have two letters from BUZZ readers and we hope you will feel free to write us about issues of concern to you as you perform your duties as an adult educator. Write Box 214, Troy, PA 16947.

Except for the articles that appear over a byline, all the content of WHAT'S THE BUZZ? is written by our editor, Dave Fluke, and reviewed by an editorial board.

Thanks for reading THE BUZZ. ❖

WHAT'S **the Buzz?**

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Vol. 16, No. 2
NOVEMBER 1996

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

Special Insert: EQUAL Year 2 Report

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: New Audit Rules 2 Thanksgiving at WPALRC 3 New Technology Center 3 Legal Issues in ABLE 4 Entrepreneurial Training 4 Cooperative Learning 5 Newsletter Roundup 6 People & Programs 7 It's a Date 8

Keenan Delivers Adult Ed Forecast Statewide

Administrators hear ABLE Bureau's outline of where adult education is headed.

At PDC update at Penn State Hazleton, from left: Sonny Sloan, Northwest Area Advisor; Cheryl Keenan, ABLE Bureau Director; Don Lunday, Regional Programs Section Chief; Chuck Holbrook, Northeast Area Advisor.

"The field is experiencing many changes, changes that have their beginnings at the federal level and that focus on the awareness nationwide that adult learners are in need of basic skills education in order to be competitive and to take their places as full and contributing members in their communities."

With these words, program directors and administrators from adult basic and literacy education programs were invited to join ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan and members of her staff in discussing "where we have been, where we are now, and where we are going" at a series of meetings hosted by each of the six regional Professional Development Centers throughout the state.

Although the meetings served a number of purposes, one of the goals was to provide every program a consistent baseline of information regarding adult education reforms by assuring that every program hears the same information from the same persons in the ABLE Bureau.

The past and the present. Describing Pennsylvania ABLE reforms for the future depends upon an understanding of what has been happening during the past several years. Administratively, the Bureau has eliminated delays in contract processing, funding decisions, and the delivery of funding to local programs. There is also now more flexibility and less restriction on the administration of local programs, and technology usage is being facilitated and encouraged.

A major initiative being given top priority by the Bureau is the improvement of program quality. With increases in the availability and accessibility to professional development opportunities and the resultant improvement in quality of services to adult learners, it is becoming essential that programs document results of program services. "ABLE has moved beyond being a social cause and has become an economic cause," said Ms. Keenan, "and although it is obvious you feel you are making a difference in the lives of the adults which you teach, the inability to document program results has become a real qualitative issue. We, as a field, have to come together to document the results that we get with our students."

Closely related to the increased professional development emphasis are the special challenges presented by the diverse teaching competencies required of adult educators and the varied environments and situations in which instruction is presented. In a largely rural state such as Pennsylvania, adult educators can feel a sense of isolation. The high turnover of adult education teachers, prima-

Continued on p.2

Feds Boost Adult Ed Act by $95 Million

Don't start revising your budgets yet, but there's going to be more federal funding available for adult education next year, thanks to a last-minute measure voted for by Democrats and Republicans just before the 104th Congress adjourned. Adult education state grants were increased about 40% and, according to Alice Johnson of the National Institute for Literacy, "This phenomenal success is the culmination of efforts by the field to educate policymakers about the importance and effectiveness of adult education and literacy over the past year or so. Your hard work has paid off—congratulations!"

Policy watchers advise adult educators to keep an eye on future Congressional actions to be sure the increase remains intact through any rescission actions that may occur in the next Congress. ❖

FORECAST, from p.1

rily due to the part-time nature of their employment, is another aspect of the professional development challenge. Finally, a large and very important part of the adult education effort in Pennsylvania is accomplished by volunteer tutors. Providing training opportunities and defining competencies for volunteers which are comparable to those of full-time adult educators is a continuing concern.

The future. On the national level, the Congress gave serious consideration in 1996 to the consolidation of more than 100 adult education and job training programs into a structure of block grants to states. This restructuring would significantly revamp how adult basic education and job training services are delivered in each state. Governors would be given considerable flexibility in fashioning new workforce development systems. Although the legislation was not passed, it is expected to be considered again, in some form, in the future.

There is new emphasis on workforce development and different methods of providing education and job training.

Under the Ridge Administration in Pennsylvania there is new emphasis on workforce development and different methods of providing education and job training. Adult basic and literacy education has been a part of the workforce development strategic planning going on at the state level and, according to Ms. Keenan, "The current administration is looking closely at what basic skills mean in the context of preparing people for jobs in the economy."

In addition to the Indicators of Program Quality adopted into the Adult Education State Plan in 1992 which are tied into local program improvement plans, the Bureau is developing and initiating a Continuous Program Improvement Plan based upon the necessity of local programs to systematically collect, analyze, and use program data. The state, in turn, will support the local program efforts by 1) linking state policy to support program improvement need, 2) identifying what basic skills an adult should know and be able to demonstrate, 3) developing performance standards and common learner assessment outcomes, and 4) providing professional development opportunities to support teaching and learning and program improvement. Included in professional development opportunities are Project EQUAL and the Professional Development Centers, along with the two State Literacy Resource Centers.

Participants at the meeting we attended were appreciative of the opportunity to "get the word" directly from ABLE Bureau leaders. Many of the initiatives discussed have already been put into effect in some programs; some programs are planning local strategies to incorporate initiatives into a program improvement plan; still others will use the information from meetings such as this to begin to think about what's happening in adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and how and when their local program can begin to get in step with the new concepts which are rapidly developing.

Most of us came away from the meeting with many thoughts, foremost of which was "The times they are a-changin'."❖

AUDIT REQUIREMENTS REVISED FOR NONPROFITS

Office of Management of the Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 contains definitions and other criteria related to the performance of required audits for nonprofit organizations, including adult basic and literacy education programs receiving federal funds.

On April 22, 1996, OMB revised the regulations in A-133 and has increased the level required for programs to have audits. The new regulation exempts nonprofit organizations "expending" (formerly "receiving") less than $300,000. Other portions of A-133 have been revised and nonprofit organizations are advised to consult with their accountants.

For additional information, contact the Financial Standards and Reporting Branch, Office of Federal Management, OMB, Washington, DC 20503.❖

Grade 12 Reading Proficiency Declines Nationally

Reading proficiency has declined among the nation's 12th-grade students, according to a recent report from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). Comparing reading scores from the National Assessment of Education Programs from 1992 to 1994, the report indicates a decline in reading for literary experience and in reading to perform a task. Only 36% of the 12th graders attained a proficient rating in reading. (*Ed. note:* And guess where they'll be going when they encounter reading problems in the real world.) ❖

what's the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1996-97 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Associate Editor: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Ella Morin, Priscilla Ferguson, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

THANKSGIVING AT WPALRC

by Chris Kemp, Resource Specialist, WPALRC

Each November we remember how the Pilgrims gave thanks for the bounty of the harvest. Seeds sewn in spring grow through summer, and autumn's bounty sustains us through the long dark days of winter. For the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (WPALRC), 1996 has been a remarkable growing season, and the staff are truly thankful that we are not only still here, but we are growing!

Recision of federal funding in 1995 threatened the very existence of the Center. WPALRC wishes to thank the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, collaborating partners, and service providers across the Commonwealth for their unwavering support. Last year, the Bureau, Even Start, and Corrections Education collaborated to rescue WPALRC. This year, collaboration between the Bureau, the Parent Assistance Center of Community Action Southwest, and Allegheny Intermediate Unit have not only saved WPALRC but established a new resource system. The system will include WPALRC at its current site and a new early childhood/parent facility in the Pittsburgh Child Care Institute at Station Square. The PCCI Head Start Resource and Training Center will have a grand opening in January.

The shelf collections at the two centers will complement each other, providing information for true "lifelong learning." Materials and services from both centers will be available to education providers throughout Pennsylvania. Please watch for more details as the snow begins to fly.

WPALRC is especially thankful for the generosity of adult education publishers in maintaining the bounty of the shelf collection. Contemporary, Glenco, and Steck-Vaughn have donated 177 new materials for educators to preview.

Collaboration is an exciting way to expand services across the Commonwealth and is definitely the model for the future. Staff at WPALRC are thankful to be part of this exciting project and invite all our friends to "share the bounty" of this relationship. Please call 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216 or 273 for more information. ❖

NEW TECH CENTER OPENS

On October 1, the West Branch Technology Center in Lock Haven held its dedication. The impressive facility is housed in a 104-year-old elementary school building. Present at the ceremony were the mayor of Lock Haven, representatives of county government and the Ben Franklin Technology Center, and other dignitaries, including representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC.

West Branch staff: (back) April Falls, KayLynn Hamilton, Linda Hinman, Terri Gummo, James Heiney; (front) Debra Burrows, Joan Schneider, Beth Young

Minutes before the ribbon-cutting ceremony which opened the Center, a fax message was received from President Bill Clinton, who congratulated the Center for developing capabilities "to help us keep competitive in a global economy." The message concluded by saying, "I commend the staff of the West Branch Technology Center."

The Center is part of the Central I.U. #10's Development Center for Adults, whose director is Edie Gordon. Debra Burrows is Technology Center Director.

According to Technology Center staff member Linda Hinman, who is coordinating the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education's ABLENet project, one or two adult educators from each of the six Professional Development Center regions will be trained to serve as trainers at local ABLE programs. Most of the trainer training will take place at the West Branch Technology Center, with the first-year goal of the project to get at least 60 local programs online with Internet and e-mail capabilities. ❖

Book Review: Handbook for Nonprofits

The Pennsylvania Association of Non-profit Organizations is "dedicated to helping Pennsylvania nonprofits operate efficiently and effectively." One of their chief efforts is the publication of the 230+-page *Pennsylvania Non-profit Handbook*, which, along with a monthly *Pennsylvania Non-profit Report*, is designed to provide nonprofit organizations with information they can use in finding their way through the legislative and regulatory mazes of federal and state governments.

The newly released, updated 4th edition of the *Handbook* includes new chapters on grant writing, strategic planning, personnel matters (how to hire and fire, etc.), and the Internet.

Most adult basic and literacy education programs that have been around for awhile have developed their own information and techniques for dealing with ethics, taxes, insurance, and fiscal systems, etc. There are, however, a few chapters in the *Handbook*, such as those dealing with volunteers, nonprofit boards of directors, etc., that will provide both new and established programs with information they can use to "benchmark" their operations.

The real value of the *Handbook* will be to new programs and programs contemplating nonprofit status. Information on incorporation, bylaws, and other topics will be useful as new programs plan their courses of action. However, due to the overview nature of the *Handbook*, programs should still expect to do additional research, especially in the areas of legislation, audits, and political activity.

For $30.16, including shipping and tax, there is a lot of information in *The Pennsylvania Non-Profit Handbook*. To order, contact White Hat Communications, P.O. Box 5390, Harrisburg, PA 17110-0390. ❖

LEGAL ISSUES IN ABLE

The professional practice of adult basic and literacy education is not a sanctuary from today's legal system. Unfortunately, there is little statutory nor case law that directly addresses possible legal problems and situations in our field.

If your organization retains an attorney or has access to one, you may be able to get some educated opinions about the possible legal ramifications of situations which you may encounter in your ABLE program or classroom. An attorney may able to give you and your colleagues some guidelines to follow so you are in the best possible legal position in your work as an adult educator.

Some matters of concern which you may wish to discuss with an attorney are:

- If you arrange classes for parents to attend and do not provide child care, might you be encouraging child neglect?
- If you are involved in a workforce/workplace literacy program, what are your responsibilities to the students insofar as employer requests for information are concerned (test scores, class participation, progress in class, etc.)?
- If you become aware of a spousal abuse problem, possibly a comment made by an adult student, what are your legal responsibilities to report the situation to the authorities?
- If you use an assessment instrument or procedure which is not valid and/or reliable, are you exposing yourself to possible legal action by adult students who might receive inappropriate instruction because of the assessment?
- If your program maintains a waiting list, are you exposing yourself to possible legal action on the part of prospective adult students who are not admitted to your program?

A federal appellate court recently concluded that educators may be personally responsible for monetary damages if they violate special education requirements.

The ruling centered on a case in which teachers, specialists, and administrators failed to identify and provide an appropriate Individual Education Program (IEP) for a student, even though the educators knew, or should have known, they were violating federal special education requirements.

According to the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), "It is now even more important that [teachers] familiarize themselves with and comply with all special education requirements."

Although many special education requirements are moot when dealing with adult students, it is suggested that, to protect themselves from possible liability, adult educators make sure they and their administrators are abiding by the letter of relevant regulations. It is also suggested if they even suspect that an adult student might need special education and/or related services they discuss the matter with the student, document and discuss the matter with the administrator, and refer the adult to an appropriate service for evaluation.

Coming in our January 1997 issue: Legal Issues in ESL.❖

PCN Airs Recordable Shows

Two programs on the Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) began October 1 which can be recorded off-air for nonprofit educational purposes: "Learn to Read" airs weekdays, 7 and 7:30 a.m., and Saturdays, noon until 2 p.m. The other program is "GED on TV," 43 half-hour episodes on weekdays, 8 and 8:30 a.m., and Saturdays, 2 to 5 p.m. To get on the PCN mailing list write 401 Fallowfield Rd., Camp Hill, PA 17011.❖

BECOMING AN ENTREPRENEUR: AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The Penn State Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy has established a rural Entrepreneurial Training Center (ETC), which is helping adult learners become aware of career opportunities and develop employability skills based upon entrepreneurship training to increase employment opportunities.

According to project director Dr. Sheila Sherow, the Section 353-funded project involved more than 50 adults, ranging in age from 18 to 70, in workshops, discussion groups, and computer training related to employment. A heavy emphasis was placed on developing self-awareness and a positive self-image, since many of the participants had experienced little success in the world of work.

In a rural, high-unemployment area such as western Clinton County, some of the most realistic employment opportunities exist in entrepreneurial businesses. As the result of participation in the program, a number of participants have established their own businesses and, reports Dr. Sherow, are succeeding.

One married couple has a small bakery specializing in sugar-free items. Their business was featured in an article which appeared in a local newspaper.

Another married couple established a pressure welding business, while another adult learner developed a business plan for a cooperative antique business including advertising on the Internet (a skill she learned during the project).

Other participants have found employment, and some are furthering their education.

A mother of twin boys wrote the project director following her participation in the program: "The class taught me that just because I have children it doesn't mean that I can no longer set goals for myself. I learned that by taking smaller steps toward my goals I will be able to achieve. You have helped me in so many ways."

For more information about the Entrepreneurial Training Center, contact Dr. Sheila Sherow at the Penn State Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, (814) 863-3777. To borrow the 353 project report,contact AdvancE.❖

Educational Quality for Adult Literacy

EQUAL

A Report on Year Two

Fall 1996

"Project EQUAL made our teachers more aware of the link between instruction and assessment. By looking at data now, we can determine whether or not instruction is meeting the students' goals."

Judith Aaronson, Goodwill Industries

Project EQUAL—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy—has completed Year Two of a three-year initiative launched in 1994 by Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education. The goal: to build the capacity of local adult education providers to collect and use data about their learners and their programs. The purpose: for better program planning and management—to become more effective in meeting the educational needs of our adult learners. The results from EQUAL will be used to specify statewide performance standards.

Why this effort? Pennsylvania is moving forward with its plan to set standards for adult education in response to the requirements of the National Literacy Act and the call for educational accountability on the state and federal levels. Standards will include performance levels for adult learners, adult education program staff, and program operations. Through the activities of Project EQUAL, information will be collected to set these standards. In addition, data collection and analysis procedures are being developed to assist programs in improving the quality of their services.

Pennsylvania's effort is not isolated. The goals of EQUAL are part of a national context for improving accountability and the quality of educational services.

Bureau of Adult Basic & Literacy Education
able
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Special Project

WHAT YEAR TWO HAS SHOWN US

Findings regarding assessment, curriculum and instruction, and staff development:

- Pilot sites found that assessment procedures are now more systematic, but that staff could benefit from training on how to select and administer standardized tests.
- Staff development needs to involve ongoing training related to the collection and analysis of learner assessment and program data, as well as use of data in reviewing the appropriateness of instructional methods and materials.

Findings regarding changes in program practice:

- Review of student enrollment and assessment data indicated that many students leave instruction before post-testing. To address this issue, more sites are considering implementing new monitoring and interim assessment practices to document progress made by students who separate before program completion.
- Programs are changing their intake, assessment, student evaluation, and close-out procedures to make program operations more standardized.
- Second-year pilot sites reported beginning to involve additional staff, board members, and volunteers in data collection and analysis activities.

Over ...

Continued from other side...

Benefits of participating in Project EQUAL:

- Multi-service agencies recognize the importance of interdepartmental teamwork, common intake, and data collection. Welfare reform, declining funding, and demographic changes are making programs more conscious of using data to serve more students with decreased resources, but also to re-examine program goals and operations.
- EQUAL provided staff with a more formalized, structured approach to reflect on their practice and systematize the way they collect data. Staff have begun to recognize that data collection and analysis are tools for program improvement, not just program requirements.
- Instructors have begun to expand their role as teachers to program planners. They are involved in thinking about program outcomes, not just individual student improvement.

ON THE AGENDA FOR YEAR THREE

- The 20 pilot sites will continue data collection activities and increase the number of staff (paid and volunteer) who are involved in the program improvement activities.
- A group of eight Core Pilots will be invited to participate in more intensive activities focused on developing Individual Improvement Plans (IIPs). On-site and group training will be provided on the steps to develop an IIP that will address curriculum and instruction assessment, as well as one or two additional program areas.
- Project EQUAL staff will work with Pennsylvania's Professional Development Centers (PDCs) to begin integrating EQUAL activities into ongoing regional staff development.

"EQUAL gave us new tools to improve program quality. We better understand the importance of data collection and analysis. Knowing what your program has accomplished and what still needs to be improved are critical." *Lauren Giguere, Lehigh Carbon Community College*

"The great benefit of Project EQUAL was to engage teachers in discussion on issues they face in their teaching, to place the power to change events in the teachers' hands so that they are part of the decision-making process in the program." *Teacher, Intermediate Unit #5*

"EQUAL shifted the way we thought about evaluation. We liked the idea that the site is involved in evaluating itself. Too often we think of evaluation as what someone from the outside does to you."

Monica Mathews, Midstate Literacy Council

"Our teachers are trying to do post-testing every 40–50 hrs. EQUAL has helped them to see the importance of regular feedback to students. It is a significant motivator." *Lee Knisley, Tri-County OIC*

"EQUAL has made us think more about the impact of welfare reform on our program. We realize that stand-alone literacy programs cannot make it anymore." *Pat Haff, Community Women's Education Project*

"Our program is changing assessment procedures. We realized that a lot of data on the students were in the central office and were not accessible to instructors. We will be putting more assessment data in the classroom so teachers can use it in instructional planning."

Bonnie Valeri, Altoona School District

YEAR TWO HIGHLIGHTS

❖ **October 11, 1995.** COSMOS staff conducted a training session with 45 coordinators and teachers from 20 pilot sites representing the diversity of adult education providers across the state. These included school districts, prisons, community-based organizations, and community colleges. Training focused on methods for collecting, reviewing, and reporting learner assessment and other data to improve program quality. Each new pilot site was assigned a mentor site from Year One pilots.

❖ **January 1996.** COSMOS staff conducted telephone interviews with 20 pilot site coordinators to monitor start-up activities for Year Two.

❖ **October 1995-June 1996.** Pilot sites collected a sample of nearly 1,800 learners to track learner assessment information: pre- and post-test data, skills achieved, and competencies attained. Pilot sites completed Learner Assessment Tracking Forms and Data for Decision-Making Logs.

❖ **April 1, 1996.** COSMOS and PDE staff conducted review meeting of Year Two activities with 20 pilot site coordinators and teachers on how to use data to improve program quality.

❖ **May 16-18, 1996.** Representatives from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, COSMOS Corporation, and pilot sites facilitated sessions at COABE Conference about Project EQUAL activities.

❖ **May-June 1996.** COSMOS conducted a mail survey of nearly 100 pilot site staff, including teachers, tutors, counselors, and other support staff who participated in Project EQUAL pilot site activities.

❖ **May 1996–August 1996.** COSMOS conducted end-of-year telephone interviews with pilot site coordinators and program directors.

Educational Quality for Adult Literacy

EQUAL

NOVEMBER 1996

UPDATE

A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT TO PENNSYLVANIA'S ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Building Quality

able

The Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education has raised the bar on the continuous improvement initiative for Pennsylvania adult education services. An array of 1996-97 Section 353 special projects is working together in an unprecedented way to integrate quality improvement efforts throughout the Commonwealth.

Project EQUAL, now in the third year of its three-year plan, has been building ABLE programs' capacity to collect, analyze, and use data about learner assessment and overall program evaluation to make decisions about improving program operations, with the goal of improving services to adult learners. By the end of this project year, the framework for a performance management system for Pennsylvania's adult education programs will be in place.

Year Three of Project EQUAL extends the meaning of the EQUAL acronym—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy—to all of the 353 projects supporting quality improvement. This publication will keep you informed of their progress during this year.

EQUAL IS IN YEAR 3

The 1996 fall meeting of the 21 **Project EQUAL** pilot sites was held on October 23 in Harrisburg. COSMOS's staff provided information to the pilot site participants concerning the results of their Year 2 EQUAL activities in collecting learner assessment data and in using data for program management. Issues were discussed concerning the appropriate administration and reporting of standardized tests, and guidelines for test use were distributed. COSMOS's staff also outlined the activities for Year 3 of EQUAL, in which the pilot sites will form two groups—core and continuing pilots. The core pilots will participate in development activities in support of EQUAL, including the creation of a program plan that will be used to guide program improvement and expanding staff participating in EQUAL activities.

Both the core and continuing pilots will carry out data review activities, with an emphasis on examining practices in curriculum and instruction. During Year 3, all pilots will look toward implementing program changes based on their program and data review activities.

REPORTING STUDENT DATA

The **Development of Criteria for Student Data Reporting Project** is currently contacting selected EQUAL pilot sites to invite participation in the data reporting project. The data project intends to utilize the insights and knowledge gained by EQUAL participants in the development of definitions for student enrollment, progress, completion, and outcomes. The project is also researching existing definitions, determining compliance with federal guidelines for reporting, and developing interview protocols and other processes for gathering information related to the project. The data reporting project plans to work with EQUAL participants in November to develop draft definitions for consideration by February.

STREAMLINING DATA SUBMISSION

The Center for Literacy started the **Transmission of Data through Technology** project in 1994 to enable adult literacy programs throughout the Commonwealth to submit their student, tutor, and staff data to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education via computer disk.

This fall, the database project has updated the program to include additional levels for students and to remove unrequired data elements. To welcome new and continuing users, seven workshops in five locations were presented during October. Each workshop, lasting between two and a half and three hours, covered an introduction to the database. Ninety-six participants from 60 agencies attended.

Updated disks, containing changes in the pull-down menus, have been mailed to each participating agency. A further upgrade to include changes in reports and printer access will be available this winter.

This year the project is striving to make the database application more user-friendly. In addition to updating certain elements, including the expansion of student entry level as required by PDE, a new, easier-to-use interface is in the works.

STAFF CENTERS RESTRUCTURED

Professional development for adult basic education practitioners statewide is focusing on improving teaching and learning that results in positive outcomes for adult learners. Recently, the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education reorganized nine Regional Staff Development Centers into six **Professional Development Centers (PDCs).** These centers carry out well-planned opportunities for professional development with input from adult educators in the regions. The Regional Professional Development System is working toward meeting the challenge of providing consistent training in core content areas across regions.

Adult educators are participating in PDC-sponsored activities designed to meet individual and program needs leading to program improvement. The PDCs offer opportunities for teachers, administrators, and volunteers to participate in both training and research-oriented activities, as well as take part in workshops and focus groups.

DEVELOPING TRAINING MODULES

The **Training Development Project** is developing materials for use in Pennsylvania's professional development system. Project outcomes will ensure uniform content in the delivery of professional development for Pennsylvania's adult educators.

Selection of content areas is being determined through input from practitioners in activities such as those in Project EQUAL.

CONTINUED

pilots and the Professional Development Centers as well as review of national resources. Practitioners statewide will advise on content, delivery, and trainer recruitment.

Content areas to be considered this year were determined through needs assessments conducted in the past year in PDCs and EQUAL pilots. Specialists in the areas will be designated and appropriate materials will be reviewed and screened by them as well as a review committee of practitioners, administrators, and staff from the Bureau and PDCs. Content-area training materials will highlight emerging practices. Trainers and training plans will be identified. Materials will be packaged and disseminated to trainers. Delivery of training in at least two content areas is planned to begin this program year.

INFORMING THE PROFESSION

AdvancE at the PDE Resource Center in Harrisburg continues to provide information services. Requests for references, technical assistance, and document retrievals were answered through such means as the Internet, state library LUIS searches and document retrieval, telephone/TDD, or subject files.

In support of Section 353 projects, certain project directors were added to AdvancE's e-mail group, and federal project reports and projects were prepared for Focus review.

LEARNING THROUGH PRACTICE

Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry (PALPIN) is providing four primary activities this year. The Winter Inquiry Institute will take place January 22–25, 1997 in Philadelphia. This Institute is open to any practitioner from an ABLE-funded program. Three PDC regions will offer practitioner inquiry seminars as well. In the Central-Northeast area most of the group's work will be conducted online. South-Central and Southeast regions are situating inquiry groups within particular programs.

Each of the regional groups and the Winter Institute will depend on facilitation and mentoring from 1995-96 participants. In this way, PALPIN has begun to build practitioner inquiry leadership around the state as it continues to provide ongoing opportunities to build professional community, generate new knowledge about teaching and learning, and improve individual practice and program development.

The **Pennsylvania Action Network (PA-ARN)** is in its second year of training and mentoring practitioners through the Southwest, South-Central and Northwestern PDCs, with Central-Northeast yet to begin. The first of four *Action Update* newsletter issues have been distributed across the state describing project possibilities and how personal peer support will take place in 1996-97.

LEARNING ABOUT DIFFERENCES

The **Statewide Staff Development on Adults with Learning Difference,** project began in August with a training session in the far corner of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Wayne and Pike Counties. Already this year, more than 200 adult educators have attended the 18 training activities conducted as part of this project. These activities include introductory, follow-up, and in-depth training sessions, as well as demonstrations of assessment and teaching techniques to adult educators who have a particular interest in learning problems.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE TEACHING?

Collection of research and reports is under way in the project called **Research and Development of Pennsylvania-Specific Adult Learner Competencies in Family, Work, and Community Contexts.** Several states have developed adult competencies lists, usually based on CASAS. Much of the research focuses on workforce education competencies, usually based on the SCANS competencies and, more recently, on O*NET. In addition, the National Institute for Literacy is sponsoring research to expand on its Equipped for the Future initiative, identifying skills that adults need to function in family, workplace, and citizenship contexts.

The project is organizing and synthesizing the competencies found, focusing on a skills-based model encompassing communication and numeracy skills. This model will provide flexibility for programs to customize the competencies to match their goals and instructional focus. A six-member workgroup will meet in December to discuss the competencies framework.

BUILDING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The **Building Communities for Learning** (BCL) project is assisting communities in establishing a collaborative process of community-based planning through which adult basic and literacy education providers, business and industry, job-training programs, county and community economic development and planning groups, local government and municipalities, and human resource services work together to improve adult education services.

Through their planning groups, BCL sites identify literacy needs, gaps in services, and widespread problems; prioritize current and emerging issues; develop strategies to promote and support literacy efforts; promote economic development by unifying literacy services with local employment needs; and develop plans for their most effective use. The result is better-coordinated and more comprehensive services for adult learners.

Four new community-based planning sites were awarded BCL grants this fall. Last year's pilot sites (Fayette County, Lycoming County, and Wyoming Valley) are functioning as Mentoring Communities, providing the new sites with field-driven training, technical assistance, resources, and ongoing mentoring.

Quality Improvement Projects, Contracting Agencies, Key Contacts

Project EQUAL—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy: *COSMOS Corporation / Judith Alamprese*

Regional Professional Development Centers: *Northwest Tri-County I.U. 5 / Richard Gacka, Bootsie Barbour; Central I.U. 10 / Edith Gordon, Gail Leightley; Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council / Donald Block, Karen Mundie, Rachel Zilcosky, Sue Snider; TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek, Brian Frey, Paula Smith; Lancaster Lebanon I.U. 13 / David Karl, Sandra Strunk, Jaclyn Fowler-Frey; Mayor's Commission on Literacy / Rose Brandt, Diane Inverso*

AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Department of Education / Cheryl Harmon*

Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Department of Education / Chris Kemp*

Building Communities for Learning: *Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy / Sheila M. Sherow*

Training Development Project: *TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek*

Research & Development of Pennsylvania-Specific Adult Learner Competencies in Family, Work, and Community Contexts: *Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State University / Eunice N. Askov, Barbara Van Horn*

Technical Assistance for the Transmission of Data through Technology: *Center for Literacy, Inc. / JoAnn Weinberger*

Development of Criteria for Reporting Student Data: *Center for Literacy, Inc. / Ashley Stoudt*

Professional Development Evaluation & Reporting System: *South-Central Professional Development Center / Brian Frey*

Program Improvement Plans & Needs Assessment: *Southeast Professional Development Center / Sandra Strunk*

ABLENet: *Central-Northeast Professional Development Center / Debra Burrows*

Focus on Adaptation: *Royce & Royce / Sherry Royce*

Pennsylvania Action Research Network (PA-ARN): *Penn State University Monroeville / Allan Quigley*

Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network (PALPIN): *University of Pennsylvania / Alisa Belzer*

Statewide Staff Development on Adults with Learning Differences: *Center for Alternative Learning / Richard Cooper*

Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth: *Delaware County Literacy Council / Patricia Reitz Gaul*

AXIS—Adult education eXpress Intercommunications Support: *Lancaster-Lebanon I.U. 13 / Tana Reiff*

COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN ACTION

by Peggy Elin Rood, Luzerne County Community College

There's a lot of excitement buzzing about the Adult Literacy Training and Assistance Program (ALTA) at Luzerne County Community College these days. Attendance and retention are up. ALTA staff have acquired some new instructional strategies and are finding that their students are making progress more quickly.

It's all because ALTA instructors are implementing cooperative learning techniques based on what they learned during the 1996 Summer Institute on cooperative learning. Some of the instructors were facilitators for the Institute, giving them a head start, for they had to practice what they were going to facilitate. Ever since, the staff have refined their techniques and are expressing their satisfaction with feeling more effective in the classroom.

As for the students, after initial reluctance, they are asking the instructors for more group work. Students working in groups tend to stay on task better, and they are enjoying learning together. Moreover, students are placed in cooperative learning groups heterogeneously, so the groups are comprised of students of different abilities, ethnic backgrounds, genders, perspectives, and languages. Their different strengths and weaknesses, along with their diversity, make for powerful learning teams.

An article called "Creativity in Action," (The Creative Education Foundation, 1990) reported that the following skills are desired by Fortune 500 companies: teamwork, problem solving, interpersonal skills, oral communication, listening, creative thinking, leadership, writing, computation, and reading. Implementation of cooperative learning strategies allows instructors to work towards development of all these skills.

The benefits of cooperative learning are higher achievement, increased self-esteem, greater enjoyment of learning, increased retention, higher motivation to learn, and respect for diverse backgrounds and points of view.

The cooperative learning techniques the staff are using are very structured to ensure effectiveness. Students work in small groups to achieve common goals. The structure involves all students in the work and ensures that each student learns the material. The structure of this cooperative learning is based on three elements:

- **Positive interdependence:** The success of the group depends on the efforts of all members.
- **Individual accountability:** Students are individually responsible for learning the material.
- **Social skills:** Interpersonal and communication skills promote successful group interaction.

Positive interdependence provides students with a reason to cooperate. An example of positive interdependence is assigning students roles for interacting with one another, such as reader, recorder, materials handler, and monitor.

Individual accountability means assessing whether each student succeeds and masters the material, for example by a quiz or random selection of one group member's paper to check.

Social skills give students the opportunity to learn and practice the skills that enable them to interact successfully with all group members. The staff observe the students to identify which skills they have and which they do not have, and they are very specific about the social skill to be taught. For example, the word *cooperate* is too general. The directives "invite others to talk," "disagree politely," or "ask each other for help" are more specific. Students monitor themselves within the groups as well. What did your group do well in working together today? What could your group do even better during the next session? Giving the students time to refine their techniques develops the cooperative skills that make group work most effective.

The cooperative learning techniques the staff are using are very structured to ensure effectiveness.

During the 1996-97 program year, the ALTA staff is tracking student progress and retention, comparing the information to previous program years' completion and impact data. The staff would like to see their own documentation on the effectiveness of using structured cooperative learning strategies in the classroom.

If you'd like to visit ALTA classes and staff development sessions, contact the Institute at (717) 740-0406; fax (717) 829-7405, or e-mail at prood@luzerne.edu.❖

SUCCESS STORIES BOOK RELEASED

1996 Success Stories: Learning to Leadership is now available and has already been distributed to many adult educators throughout the state.

Prepared by Dr. Sherry Royce of Lancaster, the book contains the stories of the ten adult basic and literacy education students who were selected as best representing the successes of the more than 60,000 adults statewide who overcame personal obstacles to learn through their attendance in state and federally funded ABLE programs during the past year.

Having a local program student selected for Success Stories recognition is certainly an important public awareness event, but teachers and tutors in other programs can also use the Success Stories book to present role models who serve as inspiration to help students persevere in adult learning activities. Deadline for 1997 Success Stories entries is December 1.

If you have not received your 1996 Success Stories, contact Cheryl Harmon at AdvancE, (800) 992-2283.❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze.

➺ Some words of support and encouragement for those of us experiencing "professional crises" in the September 1996 issue of ***Reading Today***, the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA). The message from Richard Vacca, professor of education at Kent State University: "This too will pass." Dr. Vacca uses as an example the Ohio state legislature, which, he says, is "obsessed with phonics as a quick fix for solving the purported decline of literacy in Western civilization."

The same issue carries a report from the IRA National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, which states a current definition of *learning disabilities* as "a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction." The definition excludes social problems, sensory impairment, mental retardation, cultural differences, and insufficient instruction and is nearly identical to the definition adopted by the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center. IRA's address is 800 Barksdale Rd., P.O. Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.

➺ We strongly recommend our readers send for the special Spring 1996 issue of the ***National Institute for Literacy Newsletter***, which centers on activities and information from the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities (ALLD) Center. Space limitations prohibit our printing even synopses of the well-written, informative articles from this excellent publication, which brings together relevant information about the Center, research on learning disabilities, an adult educator's perceptions of identifying and teaching LD adults, and lots of other useful information. Contact the National ALLD Center at 1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009-1202, fax (800) 953-2553, or http://novel.nifl.gov/naildtop.htm.

➺ In the Summer 1996 ***Developments*** (the state of Washington's ABLE newsletter) Judy Krein, Director of Developmental Education at Walla Walla Community College, makes the case for conference attendance as an essential professional development activity. "As a profession filled with part-time instructors," says the author, "I think professionalism tends to be overlooked … We have to remember how important it is to support staff professionally. A conference is an opportunity to nurture and inspire teachers … They receive validation of what they do … They learn that the strategies they use are good … they hear about research … they are inspired and rejuvenated."

➺ *The Teacher's Complete and Easy Guide to the Internet* is reviewed in the July/August issue of ***Hands-on English***, along with an article by Meg Gam, an ESL teacher in New York, about how to find teaching ideas online. The Teacher's Guide is distributed by Trifolium Books, (800) 805-1083. In addition to listing some other useful ESL Web sites, Ms. Gam highly recommends Linguistic Funland's ESLoop http://math.unr.edu/linguistics/esloop. *Hands-on English* subscriptions are $21, to P.O. Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

➺ In ***Update***, the newsletter of the National Center for Family Literacy, June 1996, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley says we must do all we can to reconnect children and families and connect both with education. "The biggest 'downsizer' of economic opportunity is illiteracy. Illiteracy is the ball-and-chain that ties us to poverty." NCFL and the USDE are working together to help get parents who are currently involved in adult education to become actively involved in their children's education through the "America Goes Back to School" program. NCFL may be contacted at Waterfront Plaza, Ste. 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202.

➺ ***The Math Practitioner***, from the Adult Numeracy Practitioners Network, is edited by Ellen McDevitt at Carlow College, Pittsburgh. The Spring 1996 issue reports the results of a survey on the current state of adult numeracy research and practice in the U.S., noting that employers increasingly desire quantitative skills that are broader than mere proficiency with the basic mathematical operations. They also look for general problem-solving skills and facility with communicating about quantitative applications. The study was conducted by the National Center on Adult Literacy.

The same issue contains a letter from an adult educator who finds it curious that the majority of her students have no experience in measurement. She says, "I consider measuring a 'life skill' and have acquired a large collection of rulers, tape measures, yard sticks, etc., which I use as hands-on math manipulatives."

Dues for ANPN membership are $10, to Rose Steiner, Billings Adult Education Center, 415 N. 30th St., Billings, MT 59101.

➺ ***Education Week*** for September 11, 1996, contains a worthwhile article titled "School Opens With Mixed Picture for Adult Ed." The author discusses the wide variances from state to state in providing basic education and literacy programs for the nation's four million adult education students and some of the problems facing adult educators as a result. ❖

People & Programs

◆ Two tutors who are active in Pennsylvania literacy programs were honored as "Olympic Torch Bearers" during this year's Summer Olympics activities. **Nancy Warner,** an adult literacy tutor with the **York County Literacy Council,** was chosen to carry the torch on the basis of nominations from both her literacy program and the "Share the Spirit" program sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company. The other torch bearer was **Victor Bishop,** a former adult student with the **Delaware County Literacy Council,** where he is now a tutor. The Literacy Council provided the $300 required to purchase the torch Bishop carried. It will be on display in the City of Chester's municipal building.

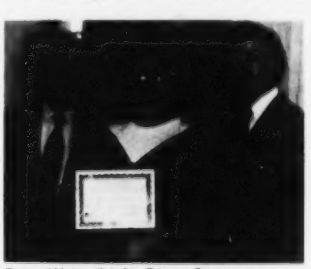
Nancy Warner, Gail Dennis (YCLC)

◆ He's back! **Dr. Richard Cooper** has been funded for 1996-97 to continue his well-received staff development training on learning differences. The goals of this year's project are to continue to provide basic information about learning differences to adult education teachers and tutors and to provide in-depth training for those who have received previous training. For information about training, resources, and information about learning differences call Dr. Cooper at the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr, (800) 204-7667.

◆ Welcome to **Stanley O. Ikenberry,** incoming president of the American Council on Education (ACE). Dr. Ikenberry was president of the University of Illinois from 1979 to 1995. He was also formerly with Penn State University. ACE is the GED Testing Service's parent organization.

◆ Two publications designed for literacy programs in correctional settings have been published by Pennsylvania literacy programs. ***The Prison Literacy Project Handbook*** is free and includes tips and replicable procedures for corrections programs. It traces the growth and development of the literacy program at the **State Correctional Institution at Graterford.** *Inside Out: Writings from the Prison Literacy Project* comprises two volumes of poems, essays, and stories on the prison experience. They are geared for use by new-reader inmates and volunteers. The set is $10, to Prison Literacy Project, c/o Joan Behr, Communication Manager, 4333 Kelly Dr., Philadelphia, PA 19129.

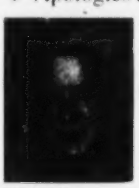
◆ **Sherry Spencer,** Director of the **Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program,** was one of a number of Pennsylvanians in attendance at the Laubach Literacy Action Biennial Conference in Portland in June. She reports that a number of Pennsylvania Literacy programs and personnel received awards at the conference, including **Goodwill Literacy Initiative of Pittsburgh (Judith Aaronson,** Director), which received the LLA National Award for Excellence for Outstanding Initiatives; **Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (Diana Statsman,** Director), the National Award for Outstanding Program; **James Gourley,** a student with the **Adams County Literacy Council (Cynthia Blevins,** Coordinator), the National Award for Outstanding New Reader; and **Marty Finsterbusch,** new reader activist from the **Delaware County Literacy Council (Pat Gaul,** Director), who was recognized for his work in the new reader movement. Two former Pennsylvanians, **Marti Lane** and **Al Bennett,** were also recognized for their efforts on behalf of new readers.



Peter Waite (LLA), Diana Statsman, David Chandler (LLA)

◆ Former Bureau of ABLE Area Advisor **Dale Mace** is recuperating at home following a kidney transplant. Our best to Dale.

◆ Apologies to **Linda Herr** for our moving her to Kentucky in our September issue. Linda informed us that, although she did enjoy a short vacation in Kentucky, she remains as Director of the Lycoming County Library Literacy Program.



Linda Herr

◆ Pennsylvania 2000 is a statewide coalition of business, education and state government leaders committed to education reform. The Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force has conducted numerous statewide activities, including two conferences and publications designed to provide information about Pennsylvania's literacy needs. According to Task Force Staff Director **JoAnn Weinberger** of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 2000 has changed its name to **The Pennsylvania Business/Education Partnership.** Adult literacy will continue to be a focus of the organization's activities. ❖

It's a Date!

November 1996

17–23 American Education Week: 75th Annual Observance.

17–21 124th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association, New York, NY. Theme: "Empowering the Disadvantaged: Social Justice in Public Health." Contact: APHA, (202) 789-5600.

22–24 Association for Community-Based Education (ACBE) 21st Annual Conference, Monterey, CA. Contact: ACBE, 1805 Florida Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009.

23 Penn-Ohio 12. The Penn-Ohio Adult Education Conference, Sheraton-Mars, PA. Theme: "Continuing the Incline to Excellence." 8 a.m.–3 p.m. Continental breakfast with the vendors at 8 a.m. Contact: Bootsie Barbour or Regina Rastatter at the Northwest PDC (814) 866-3105, ext. 224.

December, 1996

5 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Topic: Literacy and Workforce Development. Contact: Joanne Shane Plummer, (717) 238-9026.

10 PAACE Board Meeting.

January 1997

10 Reconciliation of Cash on Hand Form due to State Comptroller's Office.

12–14 National Title I Conference, Oakland, CA. Theme: "Meeting the Change—Serving the Children." Contact: Robert Simpson, Kentucky Dept. of Program Resources, 500 Metro St., 820 Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601.

14 PAACE Board Meeting.

February 1997

5–7 Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Theme: "The Challenges of Change: Keeping Pace." IMPORTANT: The block of rooms at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center designated for the Conference will be held only until December 22. Contact: Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), P.O. Box 3796 17105-3796.

Laubach Offering Grants for Books, Materials

Laubach Literacy has announced that over the next two years its National Book Scholarship Fund will make available $500,000 in books and educational materials through grants for which ABLE programs may apply. Last year NBSF gave nearly $200,000 worth of in-kind grants to 119 adult literacy and educational programs nationwide.

Preference will be given to family literacy programs that work to improve the literacy skills of parents and their children and to programs working with special groups such as the homeless, refugees, ESL, and adults with mental disabilities.

Deadline for applications is December 15, 1996. Applications are available from Mara Roberts, Project Administrator, NBSF, Laubach Literacy, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210 (315) 422-9121. ❖

Internet News for ABLE Online

• Information sources which BUZZ readers may find useful:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Education Research and Development: gopher.ed.gov. *Family Literacy: Directions in Research and Implications for Practice* is available.

Reading Research Quarterly: The research journal of the International Reading Association: www.nevada.edu/home/5/rrq/homepage/rrq.html.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ? and *Focus* as text-only files are available on America Online at keyword: Teachers Lounge.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education Web site: URL: www.acs.ohio-state.edu/units/education/cete/ericacve/index.html.

Adult Numeracy Practitioners Network: www.world.std.com/edi.

For information about **National Institute for Literacy listservs** on family literacy, workplace literacy, adult learning disabilities, homeless, and ESL, contact Ronna Spacone at NCFL (502) 584-1133 or NCFL_RGS@aol.com. For access to an annotated list of World Wide Web sites as reviewed by adult literacy educators in the Boston area: www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/LiteracyList.html.

• To include your e-mail address and that of your program in a database for distribution throughout Pennsylvania e-mail Jaclyn M. Fowler-Frey at Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13: jmf@lanleb.iu13.k12.pa.us or call her at (717) 270-2936.

• Through ABLENet, Pennsylvania's Professional Development Centers are providing modems and Internet access to a limited number of programs. Contact your regional PDC. ❖

WHAT'S **the Buzz?**

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Vol. 16, No. 3
JANUARY 1997

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

Special Feature!
Dave's Digest
... see p.3

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS: Legal Issues in ESL 2 The Literacy Dictionary' Reviewed 2 Dave's Digest 3 Two Passings 3 Corrections Ed Success Story 4 PA Association for Volunteerism 4 Myths & Realities in Teaching Adults 5 NCSALL's Focus on Basics 5 Newsletter Roundup 6 People & Programs 7 It's a Date 8

Penn-Ohio 12: 'The longest-running interstate literacy conference in the U.S.'

One-day event provided camaraderie, professional development, and forecasts.

They did it again! Bootsie Barbour (Coordinator, Northwest PDC) and Rachel Zilcosky (Coordinator, Southwest PDC) produced a day of adult education professional development activities which could serve as an exemplary model anywhere. More than 160 ABLErs from Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio joined together at the Sheraton-North outside Pittsburgh, where they learned, shared, and enjoyed the camaraderie that seems to be typical of adult educators whenever/wherever they get together.

Dr. Richard Gacka, adult education director for IU #5 in Edinboro, started off the day's activities by introducing Dr. Richard Cooper as "the person who has done the most to advance the cause of adult education in Pennsylvania." Dr. Cooper, founder and Director of the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr, presented the keynote address, "If They Learn Differently, Shouldn't They Study Differently?" In his remarks, Dr. Cooper lamented that many adult students are taught study skills by persons who think and learn differently from the adult and that adult educators must develop an awareness of learning differences if they are to assist their adult students in developing efficient, effective study skills. He presented attendees with suggestions as to how to help adult learners produce effective results in studying and emphasized that "many adult learners gravitate toward their areas of strength and neglect the areas of basic skills that need developing."

The morning session concluded with presentations by Cheryl Keenan, Director of Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and literacy Education, and Jim Bowling, Director of Ohio's Division of Adult and Vocational Education. In their "State of the State" reports, both directors dealt with the changing adult education scene and gave conference attendees an overview of each state's initiatives designed to improve quality of delivery services in adult education.

Dr. Richard Gacka kicked off the 12th Penn-Ohio.

The word from Washington. Ms. Keenan reported on her recent meetings with U.S. Department of Education officials concerning recommendations to be presented to the 105th Congress in 1997. These could include possible establishment of a national accountability program for adult education to address the question, "What happens to people who are involved in adult education after they leave?" It is hoped that accountability and follow-up would produce information about the impact of adult education which could be used by providers, government offices, and other stakeholders.

Keenan also gave an overview of other Bureau initiatives, including the development of competencies appropriate to adult learners as family members, community citizens, and skilled workers and an update on the EQUAL projects which are designed to establish information appropriate to the improvement of instructional quality in local programs.

Mr. Bowling presented Ms. Keenan with an Ohio State University cap and sweatshirt which she graciously accepted with the comment that, in Pennsylvania, adult education and academics are gradually replacing the emphasis on sports. (Following the conference many attendees adjourned to watch either Ohio State's loss and/or Penn State's win).

Materials exhibited. Vendors representing a number of adult education publishers were also present at the 12th Penn-Ohio. Most adult educators in attendance carried off lots of book samples and information about new publications.

The afternoon was devoted to a series of "Carousels" which featured 14 roundtable discussions by authorities on a number of topics ranging from corrections education, to adult education resources and publications, to counseling in adult education, to workforce education and welfare reform.

It was a fruitful day, delivering lots of information and proof that a one-day professional development activity can produce good results.❖

the Buzz

JANUARY 1997

LEGAL ISSUES IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

In our November issue we raised some legal issues which adult basic and literacy educators might wish to consider as they plan instructional and support services for adult learners with special needs.

As noted, there have been very few problems in Pennsylvania adult education which have resulted in court action, but local programs might find it wise to consult an attorney so as to establish acceptable policies and procedures before a problem arises.

ESL and the law. The field of English as a second language is somewhat complicated by recent changes in immigration laws. For example, the Adult Education Act specifies that adult instruction will apply to Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and "Adults With Limited English Proficiency." Instruction for immigrants falls into this latter category and defines an immigrant as "any refugee admitted or paroled into this country." Does this exclude adults who enter the country illegally? In some states, agents from the Immigration and Naturalization Service have entered ESL classes and arrested adult learners who could not furnish proof of citizenship or legal immigration status.

Must programs determine the legal status of immigrants before admitting them to class?

Some questions which ESL programs might want to consider are:

- Must programs determine the legal status of immigrants before admitting them to class? In a situation in York, an Even Start program making this inquiry of the Pennsylvania Department of Education was told, "You do not have to determine immigration status."
- What should ESL personnel do if law enforcement officers enter their classroom to screen for illegal immigrants?

Some other areas of possible legal concern have to do with the validity and reliability of ESL assessments. Many persons in the field consider most widely used tests as neither valid nor reliable when used with ESL populations. Does this put the program at risk when developing IEPs, waiting lists, etc.?

If your program has encountered legal problems involving adult learners and you would like to share your experiences with our readers, please write to The Buzz, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947.❖

A new reference tool of literacy terms ...

Book Review: The Literacy Dictionary

The field of literacy draws its substance from many domains of knowledge, and its theories, terminology, and practice develop and change over time. A recent publication, *The Literacy Dictionary: The Vocabulary of Reading and Writing*, prepared by the International Reading Association (IRA) includes up-to-date vocabulary specific to the teaching of reading and writing; vocabulary relevant to reading research; related vocabulary from linguistics, literary analyses, and clinical practices; and vocabulary describing the more general types of tools, operations, and characteristics of education and society as they affect literary.

In addition to definitions and explanations from *ABC Book* to *Z score* ("a standard score in which a raw score is explained in terms of the number of standard deviations it deviates from the mean"), this new reference tool is more than a dictionary—it is a source book which could save adult educators much of their limited time in tracking down terminology from a variety of reference books.

Edited by Dr. Richard E. Hodges, who specializes in literacy instruction, and the late Dr. Theodore L. Harris, a recognized lexicographer, *The Literacy Dictionary*, along with succinct descriptions of terms in literacy, contains short essays by widely respected scholars in the field. An entry on "Emerging Literacy," for example, examines in two pages how the discipline that studies how individuals think about literacy and their strategies in reading and writing has replaced the concept of "reading readiness. Another one-page essay deals with "Phonemic Awareness" (awareness of sounds that make up words).

A section of the *Dictionary* which our review panel thought especially useful was a list of 120 abbreviations used in literacy and their meanings, from *ABE* to *ZPD* (zone of proximal development: the distance between the actual development level and potential development).

The final section of the *Dictionary* contains 798 cross-references. For example, a teacher or tutor researching the term *word blindness* is directed to the word *alexia*.

***The Literacy Dictionary* (#138-963) is $35 for IRA nonmembers or $25 for members, plus $2 for shipping. Call IRA at (800) 336-READ, ext. 266, or write 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.❖**

what's the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1996-97 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Associate Editor: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Ella Morin, Priscilla Ferguson, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Dave's Digest

In which your editor attempts to tie together varied information concerning the changing times in adult education.

••• The U.S. Department of Education may allow local programs to charge tuition. That's the good news—and the bad news. This proposal is being considered as part of the Clinton Administration's effort to eliminate federal regulations that are unnecessary or burdensome. It seems there never was statutory authority for the regulation forbidding charges to adult learners, and now the Office of Vocational and Adult Education is considering regulatory changes that would permit programs to charge fees so as to offset threatened service cutbacks (and, presumably, to cover the increase in the number of adults applying because of welfare reforms). There are many questions still to be answered in this matter, including that of whether *some* programs should be permitted to charge under *some* conditions and others not. For more information see the October 16, 1996 *Federal Register*, pages 54024-54027. It is available from AdvancE, (800) 992-2283.

••• Update on Pennsylvania Workforce Development. About a year ago, the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Strategic Planning Group was formed, comprised of five governmental department representatives (Aging, Community and Economic Development, Education, Labor and Industry, and Public Welfare). The Group recently distributed the first in a series of "Updates" in which they outline the basic aspects of their planning process (role, structure, accountability, funding, etc.) and ask for input and feedback from employers, employees, and service providers (that's us). One of the questions the Group is focusing on is whether a single department should be responsible for workforce development at the state level and if so should it be a new department. To get on the Update mailing list and/or to let the Group know your thoughts, write Rm. 1721, L&I Bldg., 7th and Forster Sts., Harrisburg, PA 17120.

••• How to prepare for welfare changes. In addition to ten million children, there are four million adults on welfare in the country. Many of them need to improve their literacy skills in order to succeed in the workplace; 50% do not have a high school diploma or GED credential. Welfare recipients, on average, read at the sixth-grade level.

Welfare recipients, on average, read at the sixth-grade level.

The Welfare Bill recently signed into law narrows the number of recipients who can participate in education and training at any one time. Because of this, according to the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), about 300,000 welfare recipients now enrolled in adult basic and literary education nationwide will be displaced. Under the new law, it appears that the only way to include adult basic skills and literacy instruction in a welfare-to-work program is as part of an integrated skill training and work experience program. A crucial first step is for adult education, training providers, and welfare program staff to learn about each other's service delivery system. All three groups must be willing to reevaluate how they do business.

NIFL has distributed the first in a series of "Policy Updates" dealing with how local ABLE programs can prepare for the changing times, along with some ways they might restructure their programs to the new realities faced by families on welfare.

The October 28, 1996 Update deals with defining the role of adult education in the new system, what programs can do to ensure adult education counts as work (time limits on aid mean educators must find ways to shorten completion times and more directly connect school to work), work participation rates mandated under the new law, and other information critical to an understanding of our new roles in adult education.

Governor Ridge is given great latitude in implementing the new law, and the adult education community hopes the final state regulations will reflect the need of welfare recipients to improve their education skills.

To get on the mailing list of "Policy Update" from NIFL, write 800 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 200, Washington, DC 20202-7560 or call (202) 632-1500 and choose Option 6.❖

DEATHS IN THE ABLE FAMILY

Former ABLE Bureau advisor **Dale Mace** passed away following his recent kidney transplant. Dale joined the Bureau in 1992 as advisor in Philadelphia and Delaware Counties after working as an adult education teacher at the Adult Enrichment Center, Lancaster. He also served as ABLE Bureau Central Advisor and, because of his extensive experience in teaching ESL and his studies abroad, as the Bureau's ESL advisor.

ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan eulogized Dale Mace with the comment, "Dale provided competent assistance to the Bureau in carrying out the responsibilities of our adult education mission. He will be missed."

Dr. Beverly J. Smith, director of Immigration and Refugee Services in Harrisburg, passed away on December 11, 1996. For the past 16 years, Bev worked with refugee resettlement; English language training; job preparation, placement, and follow-up; and immigration processing. She oversaw Catholic Charities' ESL program, developed ESL Summer Institutes for ABLE, read Success Stories for the Bureau, served as Director of the Region 6 Staff Development Center, and developed partnerships with SETCO and the Department of Public Welfare.

Professional memberships included AAACE, PAACE, and Phi Delta Kappa. Temple University (from which she received her doctorate in Adult and Continuing Education in 1994).❖

A SUCCESS STORY IN CORRECTIONS EDUCATION

Perseverance proves valuable.

by Susan Quinn, Adult Learning Center Instructor, State Correctional Institution at Huntingdon

All parents' fondest wish is for their son or daughter to graduate from high school and become a productive and successful adult. This was the wish of Jesus M. Torres, Sr., but Mr. Torres found there are times when this dream is interrupted by the realities of life. Mr. Torres left school in the sixth grade to help support his brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico. He moved to York, Pennsylvania, where he opened his own business and began a family. However, his plans to complete his education were overshadowed by the pressures of life and Jesus Torres fell to the lure of easy money in the drug culture.

His son, Jesus Jr., quit school in eleventh grade, fell in with the "wrong crowd," and followed his father into the world of drug dealing.

Both father and son were committed to SCI-Huntingdon. There, they reexamined their priorities in life and enrolled in adult classes. Today, pride is the Torreses' watchword. Both father and son have passed the General Educational Development Tests, and both continue to work on their academic development while making plans for their futures.

Jesus, Jr. plans to work with troubled youth—to convince students to stay in school. He says, "Life is like hills with ups and downs. I lived through the downs; now I want to live life to the fullest and teach others that they must make a choice between right and wrong. I will not let my jail experience affect me."

At Huntingdon we have discovered, along with many adult education teachers and students, that the GED is a stepping stone to a more positive future; it is an expression of the accomplishments that are possible when an individual takes control of one's own education, giving direction and substance to life. As the Torreses have discovered, dreams and aspirations can be attained at any age, anywhere, anytime. ❖

Editor's Note: Our thanks to SCI-Huntingdon Director of Education Steve Polte for bringing this story to our attention.

Literacy in Prison

"Prison literacy is losing ground," says a new study by the Educational Testing Service. The study says one-third of America's prisoners are likely to fail at simple tasks such as reading a map, and two-thirds would have difficulty writing a letter to explain a billing error. According to ETS President Nancy Cole, "It is counterproductive to crime prevention to have people released from prison who are lacking in the most fundamental skills for employment and citizenship." ❖

USING VOLUNTEERS? ... JOIN PAV

The Pennsylvania Association for Volunteerism is a nonprofit organization with 350+ members statewide who have joined together to provide educational and networking services to organizations and programs using volunteer.

Legal issues. One of the topics under discussion at a recent Region 2 PAV meeting was the risk and liabilities of organizations using volunteers. An attorney with experience in representing nonprofit organizations emphasized that, although there have been very few lawsuits in Pennsylvania concerning the use of volunteers, programs are well advised to be aware of the areas of potential liability to their programs and plan carefully as they develop plans for volunteer use.

Although each situation must be considered individually on a "facts" basis, it was emphasized that liability may exist when either the volunteer or the organization is negligent or careless. Organizations can be held responsible for the carelessness of their employees (even an unpaid volunteer may be considered an employee) if negligence is committed during the course of his or her employment. Courts have held the key to liability of the organization depends upon the degree of direction and control which the program exerts on its volunteers; more control and direction assumes more liability for the volunteers' negligence.

Most problems occur in the operation of motor vehicles by volunteers. In one case, a volunteer was delivering cookies for a church and caused an accident with a motorcyclist. Because the church had told the volunteer when and where to go, it was held liable for the injuries sustained in the accident.

Selection and screening. In a lawsuit, carelessness in selecting and screening volunteers might be used to show negligence of the organization with the possibility of monetary damages paid by the program. A matter of concern to some attendees at the meeting had to do with convicts who are given hours of community service as part of their sentence. Close communication between the program and the probation officer is necessary to determine the appropriateness of the individual in the program as a volunteer. The attorney also identified the one-to-one tutoring activity as a source of possible liability, especially in a home setting.

Minimize liability. Suggestions for minimizing the liability of your organization are: 1) purchase a general liability insurance policy, 2) have volunteers sign a release if they are to be engaged in a risky activity, 3) screen volunteers carefully, and 4) establish a "thin" corporation exclusive of the program or literacy council, which has the responsibility of hiring and supervising volunteers.

This topic and others of concern to programs using volunteers will be discussed at the PAV State Conference on June 25, 26, and 27 in Williamsport. To join PAV ($25 annual dues) or for more information about the conference, write PO Box 385, Reading, PA 19607. ❖

MYTHS AND REALITIES IN TEACHING ADULTS

Have you heard these?

- ***Adults tend to be self-directing.***
- ***Adults have a rich reservoir of experience that can serve as a resource for learning.***
- ***Adults tend to have a life-task or problem-centered orientation to learning as opposed to a subject-matter orientation.***
- ***Adults are generally motivated to learn due to internal or intrinsic rather than external forces. (Adult education author Malcolm Knowles uses the example of parents wanting to help their children with homework as a strong motivation for some adult learners.)***

These and other myths and realities about adult learners are contained in ERIC Digest #154, which suggests some awarenesses and techniques which adult educators should consider for the improvement of learner-centered adult education.

It is generally accepted that adult learners and their instructors should be considered as mutual partners in the learning process. The basis of the andragogical model in adult education stresses learner-centered instruction, which addresses the needs and interests of learners. Adult education teachers working with concepts of learner-centered instruction will use varying styles of teaching so as to develop learner-centered settings where adult learners can set their own goals and organize their learning around present life needs.

Different types of adult learning. ERIC's Susan Imel suggests examining how adults learn. A 1994 research study classifies adult learning into three categories:

- *Subject-oriented adult learning*, in which the primary goal is to achieve content.
- *Consumer-oriented adult learning*, in which learners set their learning goals and identify objectives, while the educators act as facilitators.
- *Emancipatory adult learning*, in which there is no limit to learners' options and the educator plays an active role in fostering critical reflection. Emancipatory learning has become more commonly known as *transformative learning* and has been described by some as the only learning type which is unique to adult learning.

Not until the adult years is the individual able to transform from being a student who adapts to changing circumstances to one who desires to develop new perspectives in order to gain a more complete understanding and have a greater control over his or her life.

Remember:

- Adults do not have to be there.
- Adults vote with their feet.
- Adults are not captive learners.
- The most important person in your class is the adult learner.

For copies of materials from ERIC, write the Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, 1900 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210.❖

EMPLOYERS PROVIDING TRAINING: A REPORT CARD

A 1995 survey conducted by *Training Magazine* measured training offered in the workforce by employers. The three groups who received the largest total hours of training are production workers, professionals, and customer-service people. Only 40% of employers provide training and the majority of this being done in-house. Basic computer skills is the most prevalent type of training.

The survey results were reported in *Workforce Brief* (August 1996), from the Rural Services Institute at Mansfield University.❖

FOCUS ON BASICS ... FROM NCSALL

The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) has been established as a collaborative effort between Harvard University's Graduate School of Education and World Education, an adult education organization based in Boston. Similar Centers will be established in the South at the University of Tennessee and in the Midwest and West.

The Centers will disseminate research and best practices to practitioners, scholars, and policymakers in adult education. Their first effort in dissemination is publication of a quarterly newsletter *Focus on Basics*. The newsletter features articles written by practitioners, researchers, and others to foster continuous communication between researchers and practitioners. The first issue addresses the question "What is Research?" and the second and third will deal with topics such as reading and multilevel classrooms.

For information about receiving *Focus on Basics*, contact Anita Patwardhan at World Education, 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA, 02210-1211 or e-mail to wei@WorldEd.org. The Bureau of ABLE will be provided with copies which they are charged to disseminate through the WPALRC.❖

New Freebies for ABLE Is Now Available (and it's free, of course)

A brand-new edition of *Freebies for ABLE* is now available at no charge through the State Literacy Resource Centers. The 24-page catalog lists a variety of materials that would be appropriate for use in adult education settings. Listings are divided into the categories of Home & Family, Health, Math & Money, Recreation, Science & Environment, Government & Law, and Education/Professional. The catalog also contains sections on how to use the free materials, "Scavenging Other Sources," and tapping the resources available from the SLRCs and regional Professional Development Centers. The new *Freebies* was produced by Tana Reiff, Project AXIS, Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13.❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze...

⊶ The Fall 1996 issue of ***NCLE notes*** (published twice yearly by the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) excerpts a newly published book, *Literacy and Language Diversity in the United States*, by Terrance G. Wiley. The author contends that although English is the dominant language in the United States, English literacy cannot fulfill all the needs of language-minority groups. Dr. Wiley also refutes the myth that language minorities today are not as eager to learn English and assimilate as prior generations were. He uses as evidence ESL program waiting lists of 40,000 adults in California. The newsletter also reviews tabulations of ESL waiting lists in a number of states including a program in Allentown that graduates approximately 600 students per year and has another 300-500 on waiting lists with a wait of three to twelve months. *NCLEnotes* is free from CAL, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

⊶ ***Update***, the newsletter of the National Center for Family Literacy, in its October 1996 issue, sends congratulations to graduates of the Pittsburgh Families for Learning Class of '96, sponsored by the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (Don Block, Director) for their plans to enter the world of work or receive additional job training. "Because they understand the value of education and are trying to reach their fullest potential, each will encourage their children to attain new heights with their own educations." The address for NCFL is Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202.

⊶ The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education has a free newsletter available. ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin*** for Fall 1996 features an article titled "The Role of Program Quality Indicators in Program Improvement," and includes information about eight states' initiatives, including Pennsylvania's Project EQUAL, which is designed to allow programs to measure their outcomes against statewide standards as well as provide a program evaluation tool that links technical assistance to program improvement.

The same issue reviews *The Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Staff Handbook, 1995 Edition*, developed by New Educational Projects in Lancaster under the leadership of Tana Reiff. The Handbook was produced to help new and experienced practitioners improve their performance and accountability and contains more than 50 articles dealing with a broad range of practitioner concerns.

A.L.L. Points Bulletin may be requested from Tammy Fortune at 600 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20202; fax: (202) 205-8973. The *Staff Handbook* is available from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: AdvancE, (800) 992-2283 or WPALRC, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

⊶ "Multicultural Education is that which allows all students to reach their potential as learners ... it respects diversity and individuality and emphasizes the contributions of the various groups." The April 1996 issue of ***Multicultural Messenger***, defines and explains multicultural education and discusses the concepts of Classroom Development (the curriculum must include contributions made by different ethnic groups) and Preparing Students (values about perceptions of different ethnic groups need to be made explicit and must be explored).

A special insert article by Dr. Molefi Asante, Chair of African American Studies at Temple University, contains his response to a number of articles written by Eurocentrists which recently appeared in national magazines and newspapers. Mention is also made of plans for National African American Parent Involvement Day to be held February 10, 1997. For information about subscribing to *Multicultural Messenger* call (800) 822-1080.

⊶ The October/November 1996 issue of ***Reading Today***, the newsletter of the International Reading Association contains an article about President Clinton's recently established program, "America's Reading Challenge," which is designed to provide challenge grants to organizations to help parents support their children's reading progress. The initiative will expand the Head Start program and would recruit a million trained and supervised tutors to provide individualized after-school and summer tutoring for more than three million children. IRA's address is 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

⊶ "Authentic Reading Assessment: Practices and Possibilities" is one of a number of books and bibliographies noted in the September 1996 issue of ***Northwest Report***, the newsletter from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (105 S. Main St., Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204). The authors describe nine projects which implement authentic assessment in reading; include an overview, definition, and rationale for alternative assessments; and provide nine examples of assessment.

The same issue reviews the *Handbook for Student Performance Assessment in an Era of Restructuring* for "educators who want cutting-edge information on new forms of assessment." The handbook discusses why assessments need to change and how to implement performance-based assessment. For ordering information call NRWEL at (800) 547-6339, ext. 550.❖

People & Programs

◆ Miss America 1997, **Tara Holland,** recently visited the **Delaware County Literacy Council** and addressed the Council's annual membership meeting. In her remarks Ms. Holland said, "Promoting literacy unlocks the door to America's future and each one of us holds the key. As Miss America, I will reach out to all people, encouraging each of them to connect with one person or participate in one program that will not only make a difference in their own lives, but will contribute to improving the overall literacy of our nation." **Pat Gaul,** DCLC Director, called Ms. Holland "a champion for adult literacy and the national adult literacy movement." Adult educators attending the February 5-7 Midwinter Conference will have the pleasure of hearing Ms. Holland speak at the Thursday night banquet.

Miss America 1997, Tara Holland

◆ The *PDC News* from the **South-Central Professional Development Center (Carol Molek,** Director; **Brian Frey,** Coordinator) notes the SCPDC is establishing focus groups which will meet with a facilitator three or four times during the year to give practitioners an opportunity to discuss issues that arise as they work with adult learners. There will be groups in ESL, ABE/GED, Literacy, Corrections Education, and Workplace Literacy.

◆ An article by **Mary Lindquist,** former coordinator of the **Crawford County READ Program,** which ran in the May 1995 Buzz, was reprinted in a recent issue of *Trainer Touchstone*, published by Laubach Literacy for literacy trainers nationally. Mary discussed the importance of staff development in tutor training and lamented the lack of information and a database of Pennsylvania volunteer tutors. Some sources report that Pennsylvania has more volunteers involved in adult literacy (7,000+) than any other state.

◆ The **Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy** has undertaken a series of forums on Literacy and Workforce Development. The first, held on December 5, addressed the problem of establishing a common base of knowledge in literacy and workforce development. The second forum in the series will be held on February 5 in conjunction with the Midwinter Conference and will focus on state policy-level activities. For more information contact the PSCAL at 403 Herr St., Harrisburg, PA 17102, (717) 238-9026.

◆ ABLE programs are encouraged to apply for validation under the Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program. Organizations approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development find the approval results in greater acceptance by the businesses they solicit for funds. To date 125 "approved" agencies have received $13.5 million. For more information contact **Dennis Darling** at DCED (717) 787-1984.

◆ **Dorothy Happ,** ESL instructor for Adult Literacy Action at Beaver-Penn State (**Nancy Woods,** Director), has recently returned from Taiwan where she had been invited to present an ESL workshop. The workshop was designed to help teach American English to Chinese students. Although Taiwanese students are taught English in school, there is an increasing need for fluency in conversational "American-English."

◆ Another opportunity for ABLE programs to form cooperative arrangements is the **Link to Learn Technology Initiative,** which allocates $33 million this year to public school districts. Under the program, districts can form community partnerships with adult literacy and other community groups to share computer time and other technologies with the community. ABLE Bureau Director **Cheryl Keenan** is encouraging local programs to coordinate closely with their school districts and take advantage of this technology initiative to enhance technology services in their adult basic education programs.

◆ **Don Lunday,** formerly Chief of the Regional Programs Section of the ABLE Bureau, has been temporarily assigned as Director of the Bureau of Teacher Preparation and Certification. Don's responsibilities are being handled by **Sonny Sloan,** Northwest Advisor.

◆ Congratulations to **Dr. Richard Cooper** and his wife, **Anne-Louise D. Cooper,** who were each awarded the President's Award at the national conference of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs. The award was in recognition of their work on behalf of the Association, including their work on the conference. Dr. Cooper is the founder and director of the Center for Alternative Learning, Bryn Mawr, and is involved in a statewide adult education training initiative in Learning Differences and Alternative Study Skills.❖

Richard Cooper

Anne-Louise Cooper

the Buzz

JANUARY 1997

➡ Call for Links!

If your agency or program has a site on the World Wide Web, and you would like to have a link on the Bureau of ABLE's upcoming site, please e-mail Tana Reiff at tanars@aol.com. If you have not already done so, please list your e-mail address(es) with Jaclyn Fowler-Frey at jmf@lanleb.iu13.k12.pa.us. The e-mail directory will also be included in the Bureau's site.

It's a Date!

1997: Happy New Year!

Adult Education Midwinter Conference

It's not too late to register!

Most of us in adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania look upon the Midwinter Conference as *the* professional event of the year. Last year the Midwinter was replaced by the COABE Conference in Pittsburgh in May, but this year, 1997, it's back and promises to be an excellent opportunity for inspiration, rejuvenation, and camaraderie.

Your PAACE Program Division (ABE/GED, Business and Industry, Continuing Higher Education, ESL, and Literacy) has had substantial input to the Concurrent and Special Sessions, and there will be plenty of opportunity for conference attendees to hear about research and new developments in their respective fields. Lots of vendors will be at the Midwinter with free samples and information about the newest materials in adult basic and literacy education.

Honorary Chairperson is Phebe Novakovic, former Director of Continuing Education at Temple University. The keynote address will be by Dr. Donald Gogniat, Campus Executive Officer of Penn State-York. His theme will be "The Challenges of Change."

Miss America of 1997, Tara Holland, will visit the Conference on Thursday evening to present her thoughts on promoting literacy—the theme of her year's activities as Miss America.

***Pre-Conference Session:* On February 5 from 9:30 to 11:30 ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan will meet with program administrators and directors to continue the dialogue begun at the fall administrators meetings.**

Some Professional Development Centers are providing funds to help cover conference expenses. Contact your regional PDC.

For conference registration forms, contact PAACE at Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3796 or call conference program chair Dave Dentler at (800) 877-2694. See you in Hershey February 5-7!✥

January 1997

10 RECONCILIATION OF CASH ON HAND FORM DUE TO STATE COMPTROLLER's OFFICE

12-14 National Title I Conference, Oakland, CA. Theme: "Meeting the Change—Serving the Children." Contact: Robert Simpson, Kentucky Department of Program Resources, 500 Metro St., 820 Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601.

14 PAACE Board Meeting.

22-25 PALPIN Winter Inquiry Institute. "Learning From Practice: A Collaborative Exploration of Learner-Centered Education." University of Pennsylvania. Contact: Alisa Belzer, (215) 898-8865.

23-25 Educational Computer Conferences' 15th Annual National Conference, San Francisco. Contact: Diane Frost (888) 594-1249.

29-31 Technology in Adult Basic Education, Atlanta, GA. Theme: "Current Thinking, New Directions: A Winter Institute." Contact: Liz Dillon Black, (800) 428-7323.

February 1997

5-7 Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey, PA. Theme: "The Challenges of Change: Keeping Pace." Contact: Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105, (717) 772-7561.

10 National African-American Parent Involvement Day.

March 1997

6 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Contact: Joanne Shane Plummer (717) 238-9026.

11-15 TESOL Convention, Orlando, FL. Contact: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1600 Cameron St., Ste. 300, Alexandria, VA 22314.

April 1997

20-22 National Conference on Family Literacy, Louisville, KY. Pre-conference, April 17-18. Contact: NCFL, (502) 584-1133.

May 1997

28-31 COABE '97, Detroit. Contact: Gloria Mills, (810) 340-6841.

June 1997

25-27 Pennsylvania Association for Volunteerism State Conference, Williamsport. Contact: PAV, PO Box 385, Reading, PA 19607.

November 1997

9-11 AAACE '97, Cincinnati. Contact: Judy Scherrer, (513) 887-5021.

WHAT IS **the Buzz**?

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Vol. 16, No. 4
MARCH 1997

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

Special Insert in This Issue:
EQUAL Update #2

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS: Politics of Adult Education 2 Draft Program Performance Standards 3 Geography Instruction 3 Legal Pitfalls in Workplace Education 4 Critical Numeracy 4 Review: New Book by Quigley 4 News You Can Use 5 New Publications 5 Opinion: PA's Workforce Development System 6 Learning Styles 7 Lobbying vs. Political Activity 7 Newsletter Roundup 8 People & Programs 9 It's a Date 10

The 32nd Adult Education Midwinter Conference: 'A Time to Celebrate'

More than 600 Pennsylvania adult educators gathered in Hershey February 5–7.

Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Eugene Hickok said in his remarks of greeting to the Legislative Luncheon which opened the 32nd Adult Education Midwinter Conference in Hershey: "We need to take time to celebrate.

"Governor Ridge proposed a 3% increase in funding for adult literacy programs. It is obvious to us," Secretary Hickok continued, "that the need for Adult Basic Education has never been more necessary. When 50% of our citizens can't compete, Pennsylvania can't compete."

Judy Koloski, executive director of the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, Inc. (NAEPDC), which links adult basic education state directors, told attendees at the PDE update session on Thursday that adult educators throughout the country and especially in Pennsylvania have created an awareness on the part of Congress which has resulted in bipartisan support of literacy and adult education. She singled out the "crucial" efforts of members of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) for their work with Senator Specter and Congressman Goodling, whose efforts on behalf of adult education helped produce a $95 million increase in adult education funding for the 1997-98 year (an increase which most local programs will see in their budgets).

Ms. Koloski noted, however, the battle is far from over and the next few months will be critical as Congress addresses the reauthorization of the Adult Education Act. She emphasized that, with the hoped for increase in funding, there will also be demands by the Congress and Administration for additional accountability and quality improvement on the part of adult basic and literacy education programs.❖

At the Midwinter Conference, from left, Evelyn Mayer, Assistant Commissioner for Postsecondary Higher Education; Michael Poliakoff, Deputy Secretary for Postsecondary Education; Eugene Hickok, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education; Cheryl Keenan, Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

Administrators to Form Association

About 150 administrators of ABLE programs met in Hershey on February 5 to discuss the formation of a statewide administrators association. The purpose of the group will be to provide input to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education on policy matters.

The Bureau is supporting the formation of such a group and has emphasized the importance of administrators having a forum to work with the Bureau on matters of importance to the adult education field.

At the meeting directors from six regions around the state volunteered to convene regional meetings. Every program will be invited to participate. The administrators will continue the planning process for the association at those meetings.

For more information contact Donald Block, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, 100 Sheridan Sq., Pittsburgh, PA 15206.❖

'DEFINING ADULT EDUCATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN POLITICAL.'

This statement by William S. Griffith in the 1994 issue of the *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning* identifies the springboard for his article, "Adult Educators' Political Power." Dr. Griffith's conclusions and suggestions present a challenge to Pennsylvania adult educators which is especially relevant in 1997 as they struggle to get their act together to survive the upheavals which are likely to characterize our profession in the near future.

WHAT'S **the Buzz?**

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1996-97 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Associate Editor: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Ella Morin, Priscilla Ferguson, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The basic thesis of the article is that the political whole of adult education is less than the sum of its parts—the parts interact in ways that detract from their potential collective impact.

Dr. Griffith, Professor of Adult Education at the University of British Columbia and 1990-91 president of the American Association for Adult Continuing Education—AAACE, says, "Administrators and adult education instructors tend to be preoccupied with immediate, everyday institutional concerns to the exclusion of broader public issues." He feels lobbying activities of various professional organizations in adult education are geared toward the promotion of legislation that will serve to advance their own institutional segment (continuing education, community education, adult basic education, literacy, etc.) with the result that "busy adult educators seem to have little energy left to lobby for legislation that will bring increased support to other sectors of the field."

The author identifies the "apolitical nature" of the adult educator in the United States as being the result of public-school, child/youth-centered backgrounds of most adult educators which produce a reluctance to become politically involved in advancing a broad vision of their field and its potential contributions to society. In simple terms, we don't like to blow our own horn.

Adult students should participate. Dr. Griffith feels teachers and administrators of adult education programs have not encouraged their students to take a public stand regarding the value of adult education. "Most adults who are participating in educational programs are not becoming aware of their potential influence on government programs that could enlarge and improve such programming both for themselves and their neighbors."

"Administrators and adult education instructors tend to be preoccupied with immediate, everyday institutional concerns to the exclusion of broader public issues."

Adult educators are not involved in national research. The lack of direct involvement of adult educators in national surveys and other adult education research being carried on in the United States has resulted in private organizations being perceived as superior to uninvolved adult education researchers. Dr. Griffith cites the National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs (NAEP), and The Assessment of Adult Literacy in America as examples of missed opportunities for adult education researchers.

The proliferation of associations has resulted in diverse associations of adult educators which "are not linked effectively with existing, broadly based associations which have been in existence for decades." This, he says, has led to "political impotence for both groups. When two or three adult educators are gathered together, they exhibit an almost irresistible urge to start a new organization, one that lies outside of all the existing associations and one to serve a single segment of the broad field." He cites as an example the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations (CAEO) which, in 1973, identified seven purposes to be served toward the betterment of adult education. According to Dr. Griffith, "Though the needs remain great, these purposes have yet to be achieved."

In the final section, "What To Do?," the author lists seven political steps designed to improve public appreciation and acceptance of adult education and to increase public funding. The suggestions center around improved articulation among organizations and include recommendations that adult educators pursue graduate study in the field.

The PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning, edited by Drs. Gary Dean and Trenton Ferro, both of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, is rapidly developing as a top-notch research publication in adult education throughout the country. It is one of the "perks" of membership in the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education. To join, write Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ❖

A Section 353 Dissemination Report

Exploring New Territory: Activities and Resources for Geography Instruction

"I know geography is important, but my adults want to learn life skills or something that will help them pass the GED Test; my instructional time is limited and I can't spend time on geography."

It is for adult education instructors who feel this way that Daryl Gordon of the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program in Philadelphia compiled more than 15 units of instructional objectives, materials, and lots of interesting, relevant activities in geography for adults. (Incidentally, 15% of the GED social studies test is about geography.)

The first unit in the manual developed by the project is titled "Local Geography." In addition to working with map reading, directional skills, awareness of the location of important local buildings, etc., the activities help develop some of the "integrated, comprehensive skills" measured in the GED test. This and other sections of the materials also give ABE and ESL instructors an opportunity to help learners develop an awareness of their communities while they practice valuable cognitive skills such as comprehension, application, and analysis.

Maps, graphs, examples from other cultures (an excerpt of *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid is used to focus awareness on Antigua), and numerous thinking, writing, and discussion activities produce an excellent *free* resource.

Like all Section 353 projects the manual from "Exploring New Territory" (AE 2475-106) is available on free loan from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: Harrisburg, (800) 992-2283; Gibsonia, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.❖

What's Your GQ*?

*Geography Quotient

Try this multiple-choice quiz! Answers appear on page 7.

1. A *geographer* studying developing countries would be most interested in which of the following questions?

a. What economic changes can be made to ensure a better future?
b. What changes can be made in natural resources use?
c. What are the social effects of technological change?
d. How can communication between governments and their citizens be improved?
e. How can people learn to cope better with urban living?

2. Which of the following helps to explain why there is only one trade route from oil reserves in northern Alaska?

a. These oil reserves are not needed.
b. The area is so inaccessible that only one route has been developed.
c. Other energy supplies are abundant in that region.
d. The United States does not have drilling rights in Alaska.
e. The United States does not wish to compete with the Soviet Union for Alaskan trade routes.

ABLE BUREAU UNVEILS PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Accountability ... accountability ... accountability ... is the driving force behind the new Program Performance Standards unveiled at a special Wednesday morning preconference at the Adult Education Midwinter Conference last month in Hershey.

Cheryl Keenan, Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, assisted by Ella Morin, Chief of the Division of Special Programs, and Sonny Sloan, Acting Chief of the Regional Programs Division, presented program administrators with a draft of Program Performance Standards which are designed to define a level of expected performance by local adult education programs throughout Pennsylvania.

The performance standards are based on results obtained primarily from the 20 Project EQUAL sites during the past two and a half years and cover two main areas: a program's administrative performance and its educational, or program, performance. Director Keenan emphasized that "we are not talking about *content* standards nor are we talking about *proficiency* standards of adult students.

"Some local programs have developed some very good accountability systems," she said, "but we need to develop a statewide accountability system."

Program standards and their rationale were discussed during the meeing. Administrators and Bureau staff engaged in discussion about accountability, learner assessment, and continuous program improvement.

The upcoming 1997-98 project year is the field-test phase of the draft standards. The ABLE Bureau plans to reissue the standards in final form for implementation by all programs in 1998-99. At that time it is expected funding of local programs will be determined to some extent by the information generated by program performance.❖

Link Up!

If your program has a Web site, please e-mail the URL (address) to Tana Reiff, tanars@aol.com, so that it can be linked from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education's upcoming site.

WORKPLACE EDUCATION MAY HAVE NEW RULES

As adult education leaves the traditional classroom setting to meet the instructional needs of adults in the workforce, educators may find a new ballgame in which new rules apply.

- What are your responsibilities to the employee and the employer insofar as the reporting of workforce student attendance and achievement information is concerned?
- Does the employer want access to any assessment results, such as standardized test scores of individuals enrolled in the educational program? Are confidentiality rights being honored? What can and should you report to the employer regarding student achievements, and in what manner?
- What is your obligation to deliver the program goals, such as learning gains and skills achievement, to the workers and to the employers?

Before establishing a workforce/workplace adult education program you should discuss questions such as these with persons in authority at the company involved. These persons should include management, worker, and union representative. Approach the provision of workforce/workplace education on a business basis; this may mean making contractual arrangements. Be sure each party understands and accepts the terms of any such agreement. There are adult education agencies in the Commonwealth that offer educational programs to businesses, and such agencies can provide some help to you in answering questions such as those raised above and assist you in knowing what questions to ask. You, of course, can also get legal information on issues such as confidentiality from an attorney.❖

A NUGGET FROM ERIC: CRITICAL NUMERACY

The Educational Research and Improvement Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse for Adult, Career, and Vocational Education has lots of free, easily accessed information for ABLE practitioners who may or may not have time to participate in professional development activities but wish to pursue independent professional development.

In addition to comprehensive, in-depth treatments of a wide variety of professional concerns to adult educators, ERIC publishes a series of *Digests* reviewing the research in two-page synopses of information dealing with specific topics.

In *ERIC Digest #163*, "Not Just a Number: Critical Numeracy for Adults," author Sandra Kerka notes that "numeracy has an uncertain place in adult basic education." One of the reasons she lists is a lack of preparation and motivation on the part of teachers and volunteers to teach math and, indeed, some instructors share the students' anxiety about it.

Rather than gearing adult basic math instruction to the demands of the GED Test, says Ms. Kerka, "literacy and numeracy should be linked and contextualized. Math is better understood if learned in familiar contexts that can make math more accessible for those who have felt alienated from it."

Just as a lack of literacy means learners are not empowered to participate fully in the economic, political, and social realities of life, so does a lack of math understanding inhibit adult learners' voice and control over their life circumstances. Numeracy can be the vehicle to this empowerment with functional skills in math.

For more information about adult numeracy, contact either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: Harrisburg, (800) 992-2283, Gibsonia, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216. Additional information is available from ERIC at 1900 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210 (URL: http://www.acs.ohio-state.edu/units/education/cete/ericacve/index.html) and the Adult Numeracy Practitioners Network (http://world.std.com/~edf/).❖

Book Review

Rethinking Literacy Education

The Critical Need for Practice-Based Change

by B. Allan Quigley

Reviewed by Tana Reiff

Allan Quigley's new book (Jossey-Bass, 1997) challenges many assumptions about perceptions, public support, and classroom approaches to adult basic and literacy education. In nine chapters, arranged in four sections, the Penn State Monroeville associate professor presents his case from societal, political, participant, and practitioner perspectives, offering readers practical ways to strengthen the field by rejecting destructive stereotypes of illiterates, developing a "working philosophy," keeping adult students engaged, and conducting field-based research.

Rethinking Literacy Education **draws on Quigley's favorite academic topics over the last decade, including his work with student attrition and retention, underlying messages of sexism and racism ("hidden curricula") in textbooks, and action research. The flowing writing style and citations of a substantial amount of relevant research are laced with humorous and poignant anecdotes.**

Some among us may be offended if we are unwilling to recognize ourselves as perpetrators of the prevailing myths and misguided professional behaviors, such as not truly accepting that our students are not large children. Some may take issue with contentions such as that funding is not the essential problem: "People can bring about change in the world as they see and define it. They do not have to wait for the externals to change—they can change the externals" (p.221).

The book would be a rich text for ongoing group discussion, and it poses intriguing questions for future research. Indeed, any one section provides plenty of material to "rethink"; for example, the history of adult literacy education puts many issues into context. Read the whole book and we've got quite a lot to talk about—and act upon.❖

News You Can Use

• **Building Communities for Learning** project, sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) and funded through Section 353, supports the establishment of community-based collaborative planning groups for the purpose of better serving the needs of adult learners. To be put on the BCL mailing list for information about training, technical assistance, and future funding opportunities, contact Sheila Sherow, P.O. Box 501, Millheim, PA 16854.

• UNESCO Publishing/Columbia University Press has published Volume 2 of ***Sourcebook of Korean Civilization: from the Seventeenth Century to the Modern Period.*** This English-language anthology contains material on Korean civilization.

• The **Adult Public Education About the Law Minigrant Program**, sponsored by the American Bar Association, is designed to promote the development of innovative adult education projects on the law and legal system. Grants for up to $5,000 will be awarded. Deadline for applications is May 1, 1997. For further information, contact Tracye Graves at (312) 988-5721 or tgraves@staff.abanet.org.

• ***Freebies for ABLE*** is a free catalog of free materials available for ABLE programs. Edited by Tana Reiff of Project AXIS in Lancaster, the catalog is available through AdvancE, (800) 992-2283, or WPALRC (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

• **Laubach Literacy** has a new Web site providing information about programs and publications of the organization: http://www.laubach.org.

• ***The Provider Directory*** is a newly published listing of providers of adult basic and literacy education services in Pennsylvania. In addition to addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, the Directory lists the number of students, staff members, volunteers, sites, counties served, and a short program description. *The Provider Directory* is available from of the Professional Development Centers.

• Typical of all the attention literacy is receiving from politicos these days was **President Clinton's National Radio Address** on December 21, 1996. He covered most of the bases describing his America Reads initiative ($2.75 billion to literacy over the next five years to help third-graders read), $300 million to help local programs involve parents in helping their children to read, and mobilizing 100,000 college work-study students to join the literacy initiative.❖

NEW, NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION

Every day we see new books, materials and other types of publications being made available for busy adult educators who can somehow find the time from their full-time or full/part-time jobs to remain up-to-date in their profession.

To help Buzz readers use their time to advantage, we are noting here some recent publications in a number of adult education areas which might be worth your while.

Family literacy. "The American Bar Association Guide to Family Law" is a new 180-page book for people looking for accurate, useful, easy-to-read information about how the law affects domestic life. The range of topics (marriage, birth or adoption, raising children, estate planning, preventing domestic violence, divorce, collecting child support) may provide the adult educator sensitive to the needs of adult learners the kind of supplemental information not found in other texts. The Guide is $12 and is available from the publisher (Times Books/Random House) at (800) 726-0600.

Our profession. A recent publication, *Adult Education for Social Change: From Center Stage to the Wings and Back Again*, by Tom Heaney, considers the contradictory roles of adult education practice. In this case the "fashionable" concept of linking adult literacy to democratic social change suggests there may be a need to reconstruct the foundations of adult education and possibly rename the field (send your suggestions to Box 214, Troy, PA 16947). *Adult Education for Social Change* is available from ERIC/ACVE, CETE, 1900 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210-1090 ($8).

Literacy/Whole Language. New Readers Press is the publishing arm of Laubach Literacy. One of their releases of last year may help clear up some of the confusion in adult educators' minds concerning the concept of Whole Language. *Whole Language for Adults* is a series of four books that provide a collection of resources enabling teachers to present reading, writing, and spoken language as purposeful communication, without compromising vital skills. The series presents *A Guide to Instruction*, *A Guide to Initial Assessment*, *A Guide to Portfolio Assessment*, and *A Guide to Administration and Staff Development*. Complete set price is $75.

New Readers Press also has a collection of 12 books which is designed to provide a smooth integration with adult whole-language reading instruction at levels 2-3. The collection consists of three sets of four books each in the areas of Family Issues, Work Issues, and Community Issues. The set is accompanied by a Teacher's Guide and read-along tapes; $59.95 for the set. For more information on either publication call New Readers Press at (800) 448-8878.❖

In My Opinion ...

Pennsylvania's Workforce Development System and ABLE: Complementary, Supplementary, or Adversarial?

by Dave Fluke, Editor, WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

In 1995 Governor Ridge established a Workforce Development Strategic Planning Group made up of representatives of various state-level departments. The announced goal of the group was to determine steps necessary to position Pennsylvania as a competitor in the national and global economies.

The latest presentation of the group's goals and conclusions was at the Adult Education Midwinter Conference last month and, although "excellence in education" is one of the key values identified in the Workforce Development System draft, some adult basic and literacy educators present at the Friday session wondered if the values and goals of the Workforce Development Strategic Planning Group will supplant educational goals and instructional programs which have created a system of adult education in our state which, with some exceptions, is effective, is well-based in research about adult learners, and is working.

Nevin Mindlin of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, the lead agency in the Workforce Development Initiative, and chair of the Planning Group, speaks of "an educated workforce with relevant skills,"—a goal no adult educator would quarrel with.

"Work and the demands of the marketplace," says the Workforce Development Plan, "drive workforce development. Education and transitional/work support services must be responsive to the needs of Pennsylvania's employers and job seekers."

The existing system of adult education in Pennsylvania concentrates a substantial portion of its efforts in assisting adult learners to bridge the gap between education and work. Meaningful employment is an important goal to adults entering our programs and they provide instructional and support systems to assist students in reaching this goal.

We, however, echo some of the concerns expressed by adult educators in the discussion session following the Strategic Planning Group presentation. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL), program directors, teachers and tutors found problems with both the expressed philosophy behind the Workforce Development System Plan as well as with some of the implementation guidelines.

The plan is *market driven* rather than *client driven*.

It was our strong opinion as we listened to the comments of the Strategic Planning Group representatives that, despite the inclusion of "job seekers" along with "employers" as primary customers of the Workforce Development System, the plan is *market driven* rather than *client driven*.

Adult educators base their program goals and practices upon the needs of their clients. We realize the importance of job skills development, just as we realize our clients have other personal, family, and community needs.

In terms of implementation of the plan, there is real distrust on the part of many providers toward what the plan calls Regional Investment Boards, which would assess the needs of the workforce and direct funding to meet these needs—funding which might include the monies programs presently receive to support their ABE, GED, ESL, and literacy efforts.

The Boards (perhaps 12 throughout the state) would be comprised primarily of businesses and other groups who would not provide direct services to adults. This would eliminate adult education programs from voting memberships on these boards. Many questions raised in the discussion by adult educators reflected providers' concerns that funding decisions by regional boards would be based upon political, ill-informed decisions. Questions were also raised as to how well-informed Board members would be of the needs of adults in remote locations. A Board in Scranton, for example, might lack much of the information and concern for the needs of adult learners in Williamsport.

Can adult educators work with the proposed Workforce Development System? Yes. As with other programs which include our services but are not directly administered by the ABLE Bureau, adult education programs must look at their local and regional situations and develop techniques and procedures which assure their full, active participation in decisions which will directly affect their funding.

Get together *now* with local businesses, community organizations, and other providers to develop relevant strategies. When Regional Investment Boards or similar controlling groups are formed be sure that your program has representatives who, if not voting members, are at least advisory members of these Boards. Put together *now* information which can be used by Board members to put into perspective the role of your program in providing needed services to job-seeking adults.

We are impressed with the attempts by the Strategic Planning Group to get opinions and information from any individual or organization interested in meeting with them. Despite some of the decisions which seem to be firmly established, there are still opportunities to have *your* thoughts in this matter heard. Scott Bishop, Executive Policy Specialist for the Department of Education, has offered to act as a conduit for input from adult educators in the field. You may contact him at 333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126 03331, (717) 783-6719, fax (717) 787-7222.❖

Educational Quality for Adult Literacy

EQUAL

FEBRUARY 1997

UPDATE

A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT TO PENNSYLVANIA'S ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION COMMUNITY

... And Quality For All!

BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION

able

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Quality improvement for programs funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education took on a new, visible dimension with the introduction of the slogan *"... And Quality For All!"* at the Midwinter Conference on Adult Education. Adult educators of every ilk were seen sporting lapel pins bearing the slogan, and a seven-foot banner served as a backdrop for the PDE Update session.

"... And Quality For All!" signifies a unity among Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy education providers to work cooperatively toward the goals stated in the Draft Program Performance Standards released at the Bureau of ABLE Preconference Administrators and Directors Meeting:

> ***Every adult who wishes to improve his or her basic educational foundation shall have access to quality adult education that will enable the individual to articulate educational goals, persist in learning, demonstrate achievement, and become a lifelong learner.***

Thus, the initiative known as EQUAL—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy—moves us another step forward as we all work together for a high-quality, accountable adult basic and literacy education system in Pennsylvania.

PROJECT EQUAL PARTICIPATION GROWING IN YEAR 3

Project EQUAL pilots are expanding program improvement initiatives within their respective agencies. By year end, pilots will have expanded the number of staff involved in program improvement and examined issues in new areas of operation. Other selected pilot sites will have tested a program self-assessment tool and written program improvement plans. In these ways, EQUAL pilots will have diffused quality continuous improvement processes throughout their entire agencies.

In early February, core pilots and Professional Development Center coordinators met to discuss and design the materials needed to train new agencies in Project EQUAL activities. Drawing on their experiences and what they have learned in the two and a half years of EQUAL, they are developing training modules for the skills and knowledge leading to implementation of continuous program improvement activities statewide.

With the dissemination of the draft program performance standards, the Section 353 development projects funded in recent years, the revised statewide monitoring system, and the new structure of the PDCs, ABLE-funded programs have guidance and assistance in meeting the goals and needs in their agencies for program improvement.

This publication is designed to keep you informed of the Section 353 projects operating in Pennsylvania in support of the EQUAL initiative.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT: WHERE TO START

The **Program Improvement Plans & Needs Assessment** project at Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13 has developed a draft Program Self-Assessment that is now being field-tested by several EQUAL core pilot sites. Its purpose is to help identify and prioritize program improvement needs related to Pennsylvania's ten Indicators of Program Quality. It is designed to help establish benchmarks for program improvement by using a consistent measurement instrument.

The Self-Assessment is the first step in a larger Program Improvement Plan that will take information gleaned from the Self-Assessment, help programs prioritize identified areas of need, present a consistent structure for reporting program improvement plans to ABLE, and integrate the Data for Decision-Making process that has become second nature to EQUAL pilot sites. At the conclusion of the project, Pennsylvania's adult education programs will have a new tool for initiating continuous improvement efforts at the local level.

COMPETENCIES WILL BE 'SKILLS'

Barb Van Horn, director of the **Adult Learner Competencies** project, met with an advisory group comprised of ABE, GED, ESL, and workplace practitioners in December. They discussed the goals of the project, definitions of competencies, and what the field would need to make the competencies useful as a tool for linking curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve instruction and learner outcomes.

The final competencies will be phrased in terms of communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and math skills, as well as "soft skills" (e.g., employability skills). The skills will be arranged from basic to higher-order skills and divided into several levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced). The final report will include background information on competencies, the list of competencies, examples of how the competencies can be used to build curricula and instruction in family, work, and community contexts, and links to standardized assessments.

TRAINING MODULES TAKING SHAPE

The goal of the **Training Development Project** is to provide Pennsylvania ABE practitioners with the tools for quality teaching and lifelong learning through the provision of consistent training activities.

The content areas selected for this year were field driven and based on input from practitioners serving in various roles of adult education throughout the state.

Modules include: Teaching the Reading Process, Math as Problem Solving, Teaching Strategies for Multi-Level ESL Classes, Cooperative Learning, Case Management, and Assessment.

Some of the modules were developed by a consortium in the Northwest and will be adopted;

CONTINUED

others will be adopted and utilized with supplemental materials particular to Pennsylvania's specific needs. The other modules are being produced based on projects developed in Pennsylvania, as well as other resources.

The training modules will provide important tools for practitioners to use to address quality improvement in their programs.

INQUIRING MINDS

The **Action Research Project**'s training team has been meeting with groups in four regions: Northwest, Southwest, Central-Northeast, and South-Central. There are 40 participants this year.

Action Researchers are posing questions in five broad areas: teaching and evaluating ESL students, retaining ABLE students, student skill building, improving student diagnosis and placement, and program evaluation. Several researchers from last year are serving as mentors. Participants work on problems in the group setting, like last year, but they are now linked to researchers statewide according to the nature of their question. And, they are examining "lasting change" as an internal study of changes to practitioners and programs as a result of involvement with Action Research. The project continues to maintain a database so that findings can be shared.

In the east, the **Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network** (PALPIN) continues to support the development of inquiry groups in two regions of the state.

The Central-Northeast Regional Inquiry Seminar has scheduled four face-to-face meetings but is doing most of its work online. After several rounds of discussion on pressing issues in the field in relationship to their own work, everyone is now moving toward developing an inquiry focus. Online work is being facilitated by participants in last year's Winter Inquiry Institute.

In the Southeast region, participants from two of last year's regional inquiry groups are leading "program-based" inquiry groups. These groups come together within an agency and are developing a single thematic focus for their inquiries.

The statewide Winter Inquiry Institute was held in January. More than half of the 19 participants were from western Pennsylvania, which means that even without inquiry groups there, practitioners are getting involved in PALPIN. After this intensive inquiry experience, participants identified an inquiry focus and are now collecting data.

At Midwinter Conference, PALPIN hosted a preconference session as an opportunity for ongoing sharing and network development and a concurrent session providing hands-on experience for those new to inquiry. At the University of Pennsylvania Ethnography in Education Conference, PALPIN will present a panel discussion on moving from participant to leader in inquiry groups.

ABLE NET IS NOW ON THE WEB

ABLE Net serves as a technology resource for Pennsylvania's ABE/GED and literacy programs, with emphasis on developing online capabilities among practitioners and providing training across the state through technology mentors located in each of the six PDCs. ABLE Net maintains a Web page with links to useful sites in eight categories: *Potential Sources of Funding, Interactive Sites, Career and Vocational Education, School-to-Work, Career Information, Current Events Sites, Career Counseling Sites,* and *Links of Interest for Adult Educators.* URL is http://eagle.lhup.edu/~lhinman.

Progress is being made toward the goal of bringing 60 new programs online in 1996-97, with 23 additional programs fully connected and utilizing online capabilities as of December. At Midwinter Conference, ABLE Net mentors met for a session on technology planning and problem solving, and Project Director Debra Burrows made a presentation on funding strategies for technology purchases. In February, ABLE Net assisted two PDCs with training sessions on software and technology planning and funding.

ABLE Net staff and mentors have encountered numerous impediments to technology utilization. However, the hard work will be worth it, since technology is a tool programs can use to achieve quality improvement goals.

COMMUNITIES JOINING FORCES IN ABLE PLANNING

The **Building Communities for Learning** (BCL) project conducted a competitive process to select four more communities to participate in a collaborative planning process among adult basic and literacy education providers, business and industry, job-training programs, economic development groups, local government, and human resource services.

Communities awarded new grants are Carbon County, Washington County, Northern Cambria County, and Pittsburgh. Last year's three pilot sites—Fayette County, Lycoming County, and Wyoming Valley—are functioning this year as Mentoring Communities and are matched with new sites to provide ongoing technical assistance and support.

Project director Sheila Sherow urges adult literacy providers to look at community-wide collaboration as a necessity in providing adult learners with the high-quality, comprehensive services they need to become independent and productive members of the community. For more information, contact Dr. Sherow at P.O. Box 501, Millheim, PA 16854 or sms20@psu.edu.

Quality Improvement Projects, Contracting Agencies, Key Contacts

Project EQUAL—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy: *Abt Associates / Judith Alamprese*

Regional Professional Development Centers: *Northwest Tri-County I.U. 5 / Richard Gacka, Bootsie Barbour; Central I.U. 10 / Edith Gordon, Gail Leightley; Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council / Donald Block, Karen Mundie, Rachel Zilcosky, Sue Snider; TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek, Brian Frey, Paula Smith; Lancaster Lebanon I.U. 13 / David Karl, Sandra Strunk; Mayor's Commission on Literacy / Rose Brandt, Diane Inverso*

AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Department of Education / Cheryl Harmon*

Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Department of Education / Chris Kemp*

Building Communities for Learning: *Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy / Sheila M. Sherow*

Training Development Project: *TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek*

Research & Development of Pennsylvania-Specific Adult Learner Competencies in Family, Work, and Community Contexts: *Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State University / Eunice N. Askov, Barbara Van Horn*

Technical Assistance for the Transmission of Data through Technology: *Center for Literacy, Inc. / JoAnn Weinberger*

Development of Criteria for Reporting Student Data: *Center for Literacy, Inc. / Ashley Stoudt*

Professional Development Evaluation & Reporting System: *South-Central Professional Development Center / Brian Frey*

Program Improvement Plans & Needs Assessment: *Southeast Professional Development Center / Sandra Strunk*

ABLE Net: *Central-Northeast Professional Development Center / Debra Burrows*

Focus on Adaptation: *Royce & Royce / Sherry Royce*

Pennsylvania Action Research Network (PA-ARN): *Penn State University Monroeville / Allan Quigley*

Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network (PALPIN): *University of Pennsylvania / Alisa Belzer*

Statewide Staff Development on Adults with Learning Differences: *Center for Alternative Learning / Richard Cooper*

Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth: *Delaware County Literacy Council / Patricia Reitz Gaul*

AXIS—Adult education eXpress Intercommunications Support: *Lancaster-Lebanon I.U. 13 / Tana Reiff*

LEARNING STYLES FOR ADULTS?

by Dave Fluke

Recently we have been involved in a number of discussions with adult educators concerning the addition of an assessment of learning styles to their program of testing and assessment. Most of the literature we have consulted indicates that very little substantive research has been completed in the determination and assessment of learning styles of adults. What little that has been done seems to indicate the most reliable, valid information is achieved when dealing with adults with high (college and above) levels of formal education.

One of the assessments which gained favor in high schools a number of years ago was the *Learning Style Profile*, edited by James W. Keefe and John S. Mork and published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), 1904 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091. It is based upon the "general operations model" of Charles Letteri (1982).

This model views learning as information processing—the storage and retrieval of information. The authors developed their assessment with the basic premise that subject matter is information and must pass through the individual's information-processing system to be learned, retained, and recalled.

The NASSP defines *learning style* as: "The composite of characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiological factors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment. It is demonstrated in that pattern of behavior and performance by which an individual approaches educational experiences. Its basis lies in the structure of neural organization and personality which both molds and is molded by home, school, and society."

The Learning Style Profile, marketed by the NASSP, was normed using college and high school students. The reading level as determined by the Dale Chall Formula is grade 5-6.

The NASSP Profile is not timed, but it is estimated most students can finish it in one class period. It yields scores in 23 areas representing four higher-order factors: cognitive skills, perceptual responses, study preferences, and instructional preferences.

Another Learning Style Survey being used by some adult educators in Pennsylvania is The Learning Efficiency Test II, published by Academic Therapy Publications 20 Commercial Blvd., Novato, CA 94949-6191.

LET II is a 1992 revision of the original LET and is designed to be administered individually to persons with suspected learning difficulties or memory impairments. Unlike many learning-styles inventories it was normed from ages 5 through 75. LET II can be administered in 10-20 minutes and includes Visual Memory and Auditory Memory tests. Each test is comprised of six subtests measuring ordered and unordered recall, with varying types and degrees of verbal interference presented.

According to the latest issue of *Trainer Touchstone*, published by Laubach Literacy Action for Tutor Trainers, most education experts recognize that adults possess numerous kinds of intelligence, or learning styles. The article goes on to describe seven areas of strength referred to as "Seven Intelligences," and notes that most people tend to rely on their strongest intelligences. The seven are: Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Visual/Spatial, Body/Kinesthetic, Musical/Rhythmic, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal.

Lorraine Loitz, the new chair of Laubach's Training and Certification Committee, says it is important to prepare tutors to recognize the skills their students have and "instead of trying to move the student from where he is to where the tutor is, it's more important for the tutor to try to move to where the student is."

As with most "alternative assessments," adult education programs using a learning-styles inventory should develop a pool of experiences using assessment results over the years as a norming procedure from which they can reasonably predict adult-learner performance. As with any assessment, program personnel should predetermine how results are to be used; this is especially true with learning-styles inventories since many programs will not want to expend the time or funds necessary to purchase materials and train instructors and staff in properly using learning-style information.❖

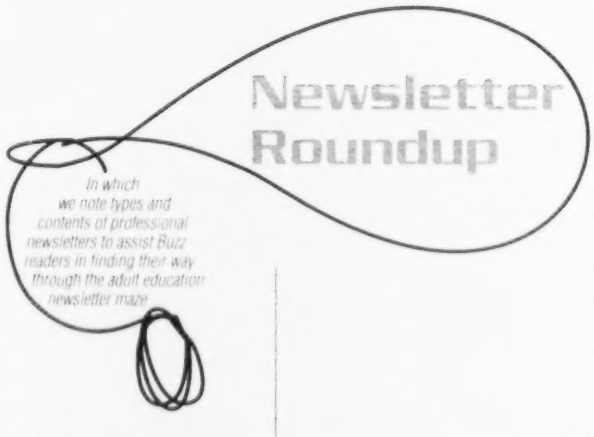
Answers to Geography Questions

(Thanks to Joyce Kerrick, Director of the Adult Education Program at Lackawanna Junior College, for checking the answers.)
Both correct answers are *b*. These questions were taken from Form AA of the Official GED Practice Test marketed by Steck-Vaughn (PA rep is Ron Ray, (412) 925-7717). We should also tell readers who missed #2 that a map is included with this question in the Practice Test. We asked Ron about the reference to the Soviet Union in question #2 and he told us forms AA and BB have been updated to EE and FF (programs still using the original forms might want to switch). Ron reminds us that Steck-Vaughn also has scoring software for the Practice Test which yields score analyses, prediction reports, individualized prescription reports, etc.❖

OK TO LOBBY BUT NOT TO ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Independent Sector (IS) is a national forum dealing with not-for-profit organizations. In a recent release IS notes that nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations are encouraged to lobby for the outcome of legislation by Section 1307 of PL94-455 passed by the U.S. Congress in 1976. A strong distinction is made between "lobbying (influencing the outcome of legislation)—permitted, and "political activity" (against or for a candidates)—prohibited.

For more information contact IS at 1828 L St. NW Washington, DC 20036.❖


Newsletter Roundup
In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze

⊷ Laubach Literacy Advance (LLA) will combine three of its newsletters (***Literacy Advance, Trainer Touchstone, and Forum***) into one publication beginning in spring 1997. According to LLA Executive Director Peter Waite, the new ***LitScape*** will reflect the multiple roles within most literacy programs and will address the many facets of adult literacy. LLA's address is Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

⊷ The November/December issue of ***GED Items*** from the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) carries a section on "Teaching Tips: Interpreting Literature and the Arts," by Katherine Woodward, test specialist for GEDTS in the Literature/Arts test. Dr. Woodward explains how GEDTS selects passages for inclusion on the test using six criteria: length (200-400 words for prose, 8-25 lines for poetry); coherence (must have a clear beginning, middle, and end); level of difficulty (appropriate for the typical high school senior); model of good writing (must have significant literary merit); sufficient richness for questions (each passage has to yield ten questions evenly spread across four cognitive areas); appropriateness of topic (should contain nothing that unfairly disadvantages or advantages certain groups of examinees). *GED Items* may be ordered from GEDTS, One DuPont Circle NW, Ste. 250, Washington, DC 20036.

⊷ ***Reading TODAY***, the newsletter of the International Reading Association, will launch a new electronic journal, ***Reading Online***, in May 1997. The new type of publishing is intended to serve literacy educators working at all levels who are interested in using an electronic medium for explorations of research, instruction, and communication. Extensive coverage of classroom/instructional information is planned. To get on the ROL mailing list send your name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail addresses to: Wendy Russ, IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., P.O. Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714, (302) 731-1600, x252; fax 302-731-1057; e-mail 76734.3231@compuserve.com.

⊷ In the November/December 1996 *Hands-on English*, editor Anna Silliman writes of reader responses to a request about materials designed for teaching ESL students for work in the hotel industry. A "Job Site ESOL Curriculum for the Hotel Industry" is available from Ann Jackson, ELC/8, 445 W. Almelia St., Orlando, FL 32801. Another resource is a videotape from the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) called "Sharing What Works." The tape is $40 from NCLE at (202) 429-9292, x200. Subscriptions to *Hands-on English* are $21 to P.O. Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

⊷ In the Winter 1997 edition of ***CSIU Read All About It***, the newsletter of the Susquehanna Valley Adult Literacy Cooperative, editor **Esther Zabitz** makes three predictions for 1997 adult literacy: 1) The federal government will allow adult literacy programs to lift the current ban on fees. According to the article, Andy Hartman, director of the National Institute for Literacy, says fees might prove to be a way to improve student retention. 2) The federal government will require literacy programs that accept government funds to provide more accurate measures to demonstrate student progress. 3) The National Education Goals Panel which was formed in 1989 to monitor progress toward the nation's 10 Education Goals (#5/6: "By the year 2000 all adults in the U.S. will be literate."), will have nothing to say in 1997. According to the article, "Apparently an update of the national adult literacy problem is not one of their priorities."

⊷ The Winter 1996 issue of ***Bright Ideas***, the adult education newsletter of Massachusetts, discusses in detail the concept of "ABE Curriculum Frameworks," which are guides to help adult learning centers develop curricula grounded in an understanding of how adults learn most effectively. Frameworks are used by teachers to design learning experiences for adults that encourage them to gain knowledge by asking questions, solving problems, exploring interests, and developing skills applicable to their lives. Write World Education, 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210.❖

ABLE Net Web Page for Practitioners

The ABLE Net Web Page contains information about resources for use in the classroom, for planning programs, for professional development, for funding sources for technology, and much more for adult educators in Pennsylvania.

The ABLE Net web page address is http://eagle.lhup.edu/lhinman. For more information contact Linda Hinman, ABLE Net Coordinator, at (717) 893-4038 or lhinman@eagle.lhup.edu.❖

People & Programs

◆ The **Scranton Council on Literacy Advance** (SCOLA; **Diana Statsman,** Director) recently completed a quality survey of its 118 tutors and 90 literacy students to determine the impact of services. Fully 100% of both tutors and students responding to the survey indicated their experience with the literacy program has been positive. SCOLA has (not coincidentally) been selected as one of the national field-test sites for the combined Pennsylvania Department of Education/ Laubach Literacy Advance National Quality Standards for Volunteer Literacy Programs.

◆ Congratulations to **Carol Molek,** who was awarded the "Outstanding Adult Educator of the Year" honors at the Midwinter Conference. Congratulations, also, to **Dehra Shafer,** recipient of the PAACE Service Award, for her extraordinary service to the organization. Carol is Director of the Tuscarora IU Adult Education and Job Training Center in Lewistown; Dehra is with the Continuing and Distance Education program at Penn State. Both are past presidents of PAACE.

Carol Molek

◆ **James Gourley,** a construction worker from Orrtanna, PA, has been active in new-reader circles in our state and the U.S. for a number of years. James is one of six new readers featured in a corporate video produced by Laubach Literacy. In the video he says he spent 40 years of his life "feeling down and stupid" but now is a "changed man ... able to help others." James was also featured in a television newscast about literacy which was broadcast from the Midwinter Conference.

◆ Congratulations to **Richard Lyon** from Springboro, Cumberland County, top GED scorer in Pennsylvania for 1996. Richard had perfect scores on the Social Studies, Literature and Arts, and Math sections of the test. His scores place him in the top 1% of the 802,000 GED test takers in the U.S. Richard was awarded a plaque from the General Educational Testing Service, and a $100 check from PAACE was awarded him by state GED Coordinator **Larry Goodwin** at the Midwinter Conference.

Richard Lyon

◆ **Marciene Mattleman,** founder and Executive Director of **Philadelphia Futures**, an organization which mobilizes public interest and private support to expand futures for Philadelphia youth, has been appointed as a continuing member of the Advisory Board of the National Institute for Literacy. Mattleman was formerly a professor of English at Temple and served as the executive director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia from 1984 to 1988.

◆ Welcome to **Hayleen Carlini,** the new Director of the Family Literacy Division of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE). Hayleen is Even Start Coordinator/Director for the York City School District.

◆ **Dr. Gordon Godbey,** presently recuperating from surgery, was one of 20 professor emeriti honored recently by Penn State's College of Education. Gordon is recognized as a pioneer in adult education, is a former president of PAACE, and is presently the historian for the organization. Get well soon, Gordon!

◆ **The Lutheran Social Mission Society/Lutheran Settlement House** in Philadelphia has been awarded $9,648 to work with a parents' organization and adult learners to develop women leaders in the impoverished West Kensington section of the city. The award was presented by Laubach's Women in Literacy/USA program. Education Coordinator for LSMS/LSH is **Antoinette Falco.**

◆ ABLE programs are encouraged to apply for validation under the **Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program.** Organizations approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development find the approval results in greater acceptance by the businesses they solicit for funds. To date 125 "approved" agencies have received $13.5 million. For information, contact **Dennis Darling** at DCED (717) 787-1984.

◆ **Marlowe Froke,** Honorary Chair of the 1992 Midwinter Conference, former President of PAACE, retired manager of WPSX-TV and associate professor of Communications at Penn State, and strong advocate of adult education in Pennsylvania, has been named Director of the Cable Television Museum in Denver.

Marlowe Froke

◆ A **Numeracy Stakeholders Group** is being formed in Western Pennsylvania to help influence the direction of mathematics reform in adult education by identifying and discussing issues that contribute to numeracy problems, examine current reform movements, and provide a forum for sharing and developing resources. Interested participants should contact **Rachel Zilcosky** at the Southwestern PDC (412) 661-7323.❖

the Buzz
MARCH 1997

It's a Date!

April 1997

7-8 Attracting and Keeping Adult Students: Retention Strategies That Work, Washington, DC. Contact: Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS), The College Board, (212) 713-8101.

10 RECONCILIATION OF CASH ON HAND DUE to State Comptroller's Office.

11 Fifth Annual Inter-Regional Conference, Radisson Hotel, Sharon; Northwest and Southwest Regions. Contact your Professional Development Center for more information.

17-18 Preconferences to National Family Literacy Conference: "Incorporating Arts to Enhance the Development of Family Literacy" and "Making the Case for Participant-Centered Curriculum."

20-22 Sixth Annual National Conference on Family Literacy, Louisville, KY. Contact: National Center for Family Literacy, (502) 584-1133.

28-29 Workplace Learning: Shaping the Future, Milwaukee, WI; contact: (800) 446-0399.

May 1997

2 Call to Action III: Upgrading the Skills of the Workforce, Carlisle. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Business-Education Partnership and the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy. Focuses on the relationships among government policies, business needs, and adult literacy providers. Contact: JoAnn Weinberger, Co-chair PBEP Adult Literacy Task Force, (215) 474-1235.

4-9 42nd Annual International Reading Association Convention, Atlanta, GA. Contact: IRA (800) 336-7323.

16-18 Adult Education Research Conference, Stillwater, OK. Contact: Dr. Robert Nolan, (405) 744-9190.

28-31 COABE '97: National Conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education, Detroit. Contact: Gloria Mills, (810) 340-6841.

June 1997

NOTE: There will *not* be a Northeast Regional Literacy Conference in June 1997 due to the number of statewide conferences. For more information contact your TLC representative or TLC President Pat Gaul at (610) 876-4811.

5 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Contact: Joanne Shane Plummer, (717) 238-9026.

Honored at the 1997 Midwinter Conference: Adult Basic and Literacy Education "Outstanding Students"—The ten students honored with awards represent the achievements of the 60,000+ successful adult students in Pennsylvania ABLE programs. *Top row, from left:* Robert Sevey, Bangor/Pen Argyl with Sponsor, Janet Herr; Michelle Taylor, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council with Sponsor, Don Block; Patrick Clifford, Scranton Council for Literacy Advance with Sponsor, Molly Quinn Philbin; Madeline Rosada, LSMS Lutheran Settlement House (Philadelphia) with Sponsor, Antoinette Falco. *Middle row:* Charlotte Pinder, Delaware County Community College, Chester Campus GED with Sponsor, Delores Taddeo; James Robinson, Center for Literacy, Inc. (Philadelphia); with Sponsor, Leah Williams; Donna Smith, Cumberland Valley School District with Sponsor, Samuel Gruber. *Front row:* Esther Iglesias, Reading Area Community College with Sponsors, Mary Schmidt and Zelda Yoder; Antonio Cancel, Inglis House (Philadelphia) with Sponsor, Paula Silver; Shirley Poole, Community Learning Center (Philadelphia) with Sponsor, Jean Fleschute.

WHAT'S **the Buzz?**
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Vol. 16, No. 5
JUNE 1997

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

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INSERTS: New Literacy Coordinating Council & EQUAL Update

Call to Action III: Upgrading the Skills of the State's Workforce

State agencies involved in workforce development, including Adult Basic and Literacy Education, held their third major colloquy. Focus was on what employers need.

"If you want to understand skills in the workforce, you must first understand employers." These introductory remarks by Dr. Peter Capelli, keynote speaker at the Call to Action III Conference held last month in Carlisle, established the "thread" for the conference.

Among conference attendees were providers from 48 adult basic and literacy programs in Pennsylvania and representatives of state government, business and industry, and professional and labor organizations.

The ideas expressed by Dr. Capelli were bounced back and forth throughout the day's activities, which included presentations by other speakers, four afternoon discussion groups, and a luncheon presentation by representatives of the National Skills Standards Board.

Dr. Capelli, Co-director of the National Center for Educational Quality of the Workforce, is on the staff of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and has served on a number of advisory groups and panels dealing with adult literacy and skills in the workforce.

What do employers want? Although employers are still interested in employees with basic literacy skills, said Dr. Capelli, they want adults to be able to demonstrate a mastery of *applied* skills. In addition, employers want *behavioral* skills—appropriate work attitudes, communication skills, and work-based skills.

Dr. Capelli summed up his remarks by saying: "Employers want more skills; they want a higher level of skills, and it *is* harder for employers to provide skill training. Employers are increasingly turning employees back to the schools in order to help with their problems. This means work and education is going to become a lifelong opportunity. The solution is in developing partnerships between employers and schools and our literacy programs."

Dr. Peter Capelli from Penn's National Center for Educational Quality of the Workforce was the keynote speaker.

State government's response to the needs. Dr. Capelli's remarks were followed by a panel of representatives from four state agencies currently involved in workforce and economic development.

Martha Harris, Advisor to the Governor's Office for Workforce Development, noted there is a fundamental challenge to align the resources of state agencies involved in training and workforce development to see that resources are spent more efficiently and effectively in training and retraining workers and welfare recipients. The basic challenge, she indicated, is fostering learning; that employers who desire an improvement in the quality of their workers are defining a necessity for workers to assume an attitude of lifelong learning. "Our #1 need is to upgrade basic skills," she said.

Sherri Heller, Deputy of the Office of Income Maintenance, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, presented an outline of the recently enacted strategy for welfare reform in the Commonwealth. She explained how changes in welfare rules, such as 60-month lifetime limits on cash assistance and changes in the state deduction of earned income of persons on welfare with jobs has resulted in changes in the strategies being used by many welfare recipients.

A third characteristic of welfare reform concerns what the Department of Welfare calls the "Quick Attachment Program." Welfare recipients most able to enter employment are given job-readiness training and support services to get them into the labor market as soon as possible. This is a shift from previous

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CALL TO ACTION, from p.1

policies which provided services first to those most in need. According to Ms. Heller, the new procedures result in monies being saved which are then available to those recipients who are in greatest need, those requiring the most training and services. The Quick Attachment Program last year resulted in 30,000 jobs for welfare recipients, and a follow-up showed 75% of these people were still in their jobs after one year.

Michael Poliakoff, Deputy Secretary for Postsecondary and Higher Education of the Department of Education, stated that the Department is moving toward performance-based curricula and achievement in Pennsylvania schools. "Education has an obligation to listen carefully to business and industry," said Dr. Poliakoff. He noted that general aptitudes, writing, communicative ability, quantitative ability, and the ability to read and analyze critically are necessary components of everyone's education. "Occupational skills must be incorporated into every level of education," he indicated.

Dr. Poliakoff praised Project EQUAL in adult literacy as an exemplary program which is helping to assess adult students so that students and employers will be aware of the achievements developed in adult education classes.

Emphasizing outcomes. The final panel presenter was Alan Williamson, Deputy Secretary for Employment Security and Job Training of the Department of Labor and Industry. "We need to focus on outcomes," he said. "We can no longer just dole out money to training programs and not know what happens to their graduates. The money needs to look at the outcomes."

He noted that this year the U.S. House of Representatives has consolidated funding for 50 programs into three block grants: adult training programs, youth training programs, and adult literacy programs. He stressed the importance of cooperative working relationships among service providers to provide a "seamless approach" to workforce-development services.

"After 60 years of unemployment compensation we have discovered that we had it wrong," said Mr. Williamson. "The most important thing to the unemployed is not their check, it is getting another job. We are now identifying unemployed persons who are most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits before getting a job and providing additional training and assistance to these persons and move them toward employment."

Following reports from the four afternoon discussion groups, JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia and Co-chair of the Adult Literacy Task Force of the Pennsylvania Business-Education Partnership (formerly Pennsylvania 2000), which co-sponsored the Conference with the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy, noted that a report of the Conference information and recommendations would be prepared and disseminated throughout the state. BUZZ readers wishing a copy may contact the Business-Education Partnership at 200 North Third St., Ste. 1000, Harrisburg, PA 17101.❖

Starting a Workplace Program? Here's how to plan ...

One outstanding countywide workplace literacy program in Pennsylvania is run out of the Penn State Adult Literacy Program in Beaver County. Its program director, Nancy Woods, has involved every segment of the community in the program's activities. After years of encouragement to document her ideas and accomplishments so other adult basic and literacy education programs could benefit from her experience, she's finally done it. Laubach Literacy Action's publishing arm, New Readers Press, has just released *Planning a Workplace Literacy Program*, coauthored by Nancy Woods and Karen Norton, formerly of Literacy Volunteers of America.

The book covers planning, marketing, designing company-specific programs, evaluation, program profiles, literacy resources, and questions for employers. For more information contact the Laubach Literacy Action Information Center (315) 422-9121, fax (315) 422-6369, e-mail info@laubach.org.❖

NIFL LITERACY CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF

Chris Kemp, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Center, has been named state coordinator of the **National Institute for Literacy**'s nationwide adult literacy campaign. Titled "Literacy: It's a Whole New World," the campaign is designed to raise public awareness of growing adult literacy problems such as employees who can't read, do basic math, or use technology, and parents who can't read and pass on that legacy to their children.

Chris Kemp

In introducing the NIFL program, President Clinton said, "This campaign will help Americans understand that literacy is about more than read-

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WHAT'S the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1996-97 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Associate Editor: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Ella Morin, Priscilla Ferguson, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

THE NUTS-AND-BOLTS OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK FOR ADULTS

by Dr. Richard Gacka

When I was asked to prepare an article for THE BUZZ on adult education and School-to-Work I thought, hey, I've been coordinating tech prep, Youth Apprenticeship, School-to-Work, and Adult Education programs for several years so why not share some general impressions based on that experience. So here goes.

General thoughts. The label *School-to-Work* probably is not a good fit for adult education. A better term might be *employability training*. The real issue is that a very large portion of the adult population lacks the basic skills that are needed for success in an increasingly demanding work environment.

Employers are asking more of employees, and there is a narrowing tolerance for errors. The bar is continually being raised and with each notch it goes up, more of the general population finds it harder and harder to keep up.

Many workers do not see themselves as being academically deficient, but they are. They fail to take advantage of services available to them; some are even resentful when the realities of the situation are explained to them. "Leverage" is a critical element within any workforce preparation program. Employers are the ones with leverage.

The success or failure of a program is determined by the people involved in it. The same model in two locations can be as different as night and day. The main variable is not the agency, the curriculum, or the model being used; it's the people teaching and directing. Leadership is a critical factor.

Thoughts for adult education teachers. Adult educators need to send a clear message to students that success depends in large part on accepting the fact that they will have to accept and follow some external set of rules. (Read: play the game.)

Raise your standards and stick to them, regardless of how much students might complain. Part of the problem is that for years educators have been lowering standards and making excuses for unacceptable performance.

Employers are fond of saying, "It's what goes out the back door that counts." For educators, two questions sum up this idea: 1) Does what you are teaching have relevance to students' lives? and 2) What can students do at the end of a session that they couldn't do when the session started?

An absolutely critical element of all adult education is the development of self-discipline.

Regardless of what you call it—"work ethic," "work hardening," or "responsibility"—an absolutely critical element of all adult education is the development of self-discipline. Build activities that develop self-control into every lesson you present.

There are three keys to adult learners' success in the world of work: ability, skills, and attitude. Some jobs don't require a high level of skill or ability, but all jobs require a positive attitude.

Teach by doing, not by talking. Request that *projects* be done, not worksheets. There's not an employer out there who assesses workers using a multiple-choice test.

Thoughts for administrators. Adult literacy providers are named in funding guidelines as "partners" or "stakeholders." We can learn a lot from what is going on in Tech Prep, School-to-Work, and Vocational Education. If you're not talking to these people you should be, because that's the only way you will get in on the action. Once at the table, you will need to clearly explain what your program has to offer. Vague generalities and educational pabulum won't cut it. Remember the back door.

Employers and educators live in two very different worlds, talk different languages, and play by different sets of rules, but have essentially the same problems. Employers know they have problems but many of them have difficulty explaining to educators what those problems are.

Don't look for a School-to-Work curriculum silver bullet—there is no such thing. School-to-Work is a concept that has more to do with common sense than any special technique. Teach students what they need to know and make them prove to you what they can do.❖

Dr. Gacka is Director of Adult Education/Tech Prep/School-to-Work at the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5 in Edinboro.

Thank-you!

This is the final issue of WHAT'S THE BUZZ? for 1996-97. We have received word there will be a BUZZ in 1997-98, and we expect the first issue to be in your hands by September 15, 1997.

We now send WHAT'S THE BUZZ? to more than 4,000 adult educators throughout Pennsylvania, and each week we receive requests to be added to our mailing list.

Our thanks to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education for the technical and financial support they have provided us over the years. Thanks also to our editorial board: Priscilla Ferguson of the Tri-County OIC in Harrisburg; Ella Morin, Chief of the Special Projects Division for the ABLE Bureau; and Tana Reiff, Project AXIS Coordinator, Lancaster-Lebanon I.U. 13.

We appreciate your supportive comments and look forward to hearing from you in 1997-98. We hope you have a relaxing, enjoyable, and challenging summer.

Dave Fluke, Editor

In My Opinion

School-to-Work: For youth?—yes. For adults?—maybe.

by Dave Fluke, Editor

Economic competitiveness and the changing nature of the workplace have created pressures on adult basic and literacy education to provide adequate preparation for adults entering the world of work—preparation that extends skills and competencies developed in traditional reading, writing, and math instruction to job and occupational skills.

Since 1994, when the U.S. Congress passed the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, we have seen adult education programs searching for ideas as to how the concept of moving from school to work can be built into our programs.

Unfortunately, as state governments (including Pennsylvania) developed guidelines and procedures for School-to-Work, most of the transition movement's energy was applied to youth, not adults, specifically in-school youth, not adult learners.

Now that "economic development" is the name of the game, policymakers are beginning to realize the importance of what adult educators have known all along—basic skills are basic skills and there are no shortcuts for adults who cannot read, write, or do math as they move into a work situation requiring adaptable and flexible workers with high levels of academic and technical skills.

In this issue of The Buzz we feature comments by an experienced adult educator who has been ahead of the game in the areas of Tech Prep and School-to-Work. Richard Gacka notes that "the label *School-to-Work* probably is not a good fit for adult education." We agree.

On the other hand, adult educators must recognize traditional business as usual in adult learner instruction isn't going to work. As much as we insist that we are "client-driven" rather than "economy-driven," we must accept the truism that our programs follow the money. At this time in adult education federal and state money is supporting workforce development concepts such as School-to-Work—even for adults.

It's a challenge to shift instruction from priorities set by a book publisher to assisting adult learners meet the goals they identify as important to them. It's a challenge to get out of the classroom and develop cooperative education and training experiences for adult students with local businesses. And to date there hasn't been much help available to adult educators who share their students' need to develop up-to-date job skills.

Help is available. Contact the State Literacy Resource Centers and ask for materials and information: AdvancE, (800) 992-2283; WPALRC, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (1900 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210) has materials available including an "Alert" titled "School-to-Work Transition," which lists 18 print resources and six resource organizations dealing with School-to-Work in high schools.

Some excellent materials concerning School-to-Work are available from the Northwest Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main St., Ste. 500, Portland, OR 97204-3297.

And ask around—there is a good chance some School-to-Work activities are taking place in a nearby school district. Adult learners have needs and experiences different from high school students, but until more adult education programs develop comprehensive programs we might have to depend on whatever information we can find.❖

ABLE BUREAU ANNOUNCES TECH UPDATE

The Adult Basic and Literacy Education Bureau recently notified program directors of its ongoing activities concerning technology use designed to improve services to adult learners.

The Bureau recognizes the importance of adult learners' developing skills in technology if they are expected to function in an increasingly technologically oriented society. With this in mind the Bureau encourages ABLE programs to develop a technology plan so the transition to technology in the classroom and administrative functions will be orderly and efficient. ABLE Net is a project conducted with section 353 funds by Central IU #10 to assist adult education programs and professionals to develop technology plans and activities.

Despite limits imposed on programs for the purchase of computers and other equipment, ABLE Net can provide technical assistance for programs looking for alternative funding sources. For more information call ABLE Net coordinator Deb Burrows at (717) 893-4038.❖

USDOE CORRECTS TABE SCORES

On October 25, 1996, the U.S. Secretary of Education published a notice in the *Federal Register* which provided a list of "ability-to-benefit" tests and acceptable (passing) scores approved for use under the Higher Education Act of 1965. These tests and passing scores are used to determine eligibility for federal Pell grants and other financial-aid programs. Incorrect passing scores for the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) were listed and, in the *Register* for March 7, 1997, the Department of Education issued a listing of the correct scores:

- Forms 5 & 6, Level A, Survey Version and Complete Battery Version: Reading Total-768; Total Mathematics-783; Total Language-714.
- Forms 7 & 8, Level A, Survey Version and Complete Battery Version: Reading-559; Total Mathematics-562; Language-545.

For more information call Lorraine Kennedy, U.S. Department of Education (202) 708-7888.❖

First Lady Michele Ridge Announces Appointees to Statewide Literacy Coordinating Council

WILLIAMSPORT (May 12)—Joined by reigning Miss America Tara Dawn Holland and Lt. Gov. Mark Schweiker's wife, Kathy, First Lady Michele M. Ridge announced Gov. Tom Ridge's appointees to the Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Interagency Coordinating Council.

Gov. Ridge has charged the new council with helping coordinate literacy services offered by the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Public Welfare, Labor and Industry, and Community and Economic Development. The council also will help develop communications strategies to promote literacy, with a focus on enabling adult students to become life-long learners and more productive members of their communities.

"The governor and I believe this is a major step forward in our effort to create more comprehensive and efficient literacy services," Mrs. Ridge said of the council, whose members represent local providers of adult basic and literacy education; business, industry and unions; the media; and state government.

"As these many segments of the community join forces to improve the literacy skills of children and adults, we are making a powerful investment in the future of Pennsylvania," the first lady added during the announcement at the James V. Brown Library in Williamsport.

Mrs. Ridge also lauded the Lycoming County Literacy Project, based at the library, for its involvement in "Forging a Literacy Partnership for Violence Prevention"—a program that teaches a curriculum to improve family literacy and conflict resolution skills. The program, supported by a grant announced by Gov. Ridge last year, is a collaborative effort of the Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children and the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Labor and Industry. Chaired by Mrs. Ridge, the Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children is a community-based initiative that seeks to curb youth violence by reducing illiteracy, academic failure, child abuse, and other factors that make children more likely to commit crime.

"We are making a powerful investment in the future of Pennsylvania." ***—First Lady Michele Ridge***

Following the announcement at the James V. Brown library, Mrs. Ridge, Mrs. Schweiker, and Ms. Holland visited the Community Arts Center in Williamsport, where they addressed approximately 1,500 students, literacy volunteers, and adult and youth learners from the Lycoming County area. Ms. Holland highlighted her Miss America platform promoting literacy.

Gov. Ridge, under the new state budget, has allocated $48 million for libraries and literacy programs—a $1.4 million increase over the previous fiscal year.

Members of the statewide literacy council are:

- **Carol Molek**, Director of Adult Education, Tuscarora Intermediate Unit, McVeytown, Mifflin County;
- **Jo Ann Weinberger**, executive director, Center for Literacy, and co-chair of Adult Literacy Task Force of Pennsylvania Business Education Partnership, Philadelphia;
- **Willie Woods**, vice president, Harrisburg Area Community College, Dauphin County;
- **Hayleen Stephan**, project director, Even Start Program, York City School District, York County;
- **Linda Herr**, director, Lycoming County Literacy Council, Williamsport, Lycoming County;
- **Andrea Eberling**, Newspapers In Education, Lebanon Daily News, Lebanon, Lebanon County;
- **Brian Lockman**, vice president and chief operating officer, Pennsylvania Cable Network, Camp Hill, Cumberland County;
- **Larry Sparta**, coordinator of energy education programs, PP&L, Allentown, Lehigh County;
- **Fred Hartwigsen**, vice president of public relations, UGI Corp., and member of the Adult Literacy Task Force, Harrisburg, Dauphin County;
- **Donna Cheatham**, educational coordinator, Pennsylvania Blue Shield, Camp Hill, Cumberland County;
- **Peter Butler**, engineering manager, Proctor and Gamble Co., and member of the State Job Training Coordinating Council, Mehoopany, Wyoming County;
- **Dan Merk**, Lycoming County Literacy Coalition, Williamsport, Lycoming County;
- **Sandy Strunk**, first vice president, Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education;
- **Susan Brownlee**, co-director, the Grable Foundation, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County;
- **Gary Millspaugh**, executive director and CEO, Allentown Rescue Mission, Allentown, Lehigh County;
- **Dick Torbert**, vice president, Mellon Bank, and chair of Adult Literacy Task Force of Pennsylvania Business Education Partnership, Philadelphia;
- **Alan Williamson**, deputy of the Office of Employment and Training, Department of Labor and Industry;
- **Sherry Heller**, deputy of the Office of Income Maintenance, Department of Public Welfare
- **Philip Calhoun**, Deputy of the Office of Trade, Technology, and Economic Development, Department of Community and Economic Development; and
- **Michael Poliakoff**, Deputy of the Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education, Department of Education❖

Educational Quality for Adult Literacy

EQUAL

JUNE 1997

UPDATE

Driving the Initiative

Project EQUAL is developing Pennsylvania's adult education program improvement and accountability system. The staff of Abt Associates have been working to support the further development and dissemination of Project EQUAL through a number of activities.

Janet Voight from Abt conducted visits to each of the Project EQUAL core pilot sites, meeting with staff to discuss their EQUAL activities and ways in which their participation in EQUAL has helped improve their program operations.

Abt's staff have reviewed the Data for Decision Making Logs submitted by EQUAL sites and are providing feedback to the sites on their problem-solving strategies using program data.

An important component of Abt's work on Project EQUAL this year has been to provide technical assistance to Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education staff and Section 353 project directors. Judy Alamprese facilitated a discussion with EQUAL sites and Professional Development Center staff to develop the framework for EQUAL training modules. She also has been working with Section 353 project directors in their development of materials to support the dissemination and implementation of EQUAL.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: FIRST STEP TOWARD IMPROVEMENT

The **Program Improvement Plans** project is working with several EQUAL sites in piloting a draft self-assessment instrument designed to help programs think through what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why they are doing it. When the pilots have completed the draft self-assessment, they will have not only a laundry list of potential areas for program improvement, but also a solid sense of what is and is not working in key program areas. The EQUAL pilot sites will provide valuable feedback related to the design of the self-assessment instrument and the process of working through it with a Program Improvement Team.

Based on the ten Indicators of Program Quality, the self-assessment tool guides Program Improvement Teams through a series of questions related to each indicator. Questions are of three types: 1) questions about whether a program is doing certain things and if documentation is collected to support these activities, 2) descriptive questions that ask how certain things are done within the program, and 3) brainstorming questions designed to generate ideas for future investigation.

Project findings are not yet available; it is clear, however, that the pilot sites have found the instrument helpful in identifying areas for program improvement.

Training will soon be available to help programs use the revised self-assessment instrument. Since it parallels the ABLE monitoring instrument, it will also be an excellent tool for helping programs prepare for a monitoring visit. Until a program can clearly articulate what it is doing, how it is doing it, and why, positive change is little more than a shot in the dark. As the first step in the program-improvement cycle, program self-assessment plays an essential role in helping programs systematically identify key areas of strength and weakness. With this knowledge as a starting point, a program is well on its way to demonstrating continuous improvement.

DEFINING LEARNER COMPETENCIES

The work group of the **Learner Competencies** project has met to review and discuss the draft skills lists. These lists include communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening), math, metacognitive (learning-to-learn), and basic "employability" (e.g., time management) skills. Organized in three levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced), these lists will provide a framework for ABLE programs that will inform curriculum design, focus instruction, and link instruction to assessment.

STREAMLINING DATA SUBMISSION

An upgrade of the data system, Version 2.1, has been mailed to agencies participating in mechanized data collection. Many bugs have been fixed (e.g. printer problems), and fields have been added to enable complete export to PDE of the Program Data Form. This version will assist programs in providing valid and complete information for export to PDE at the end of the year.

TRAINING MODULES AVAILABLE SOON

As the project year winds down staff training modules are in the last stages of development by the **Training Development Project**.

The Assessment module offers comprehensive training in a three-day format with a follow-up period during which technical assistance will be offered. Content of the module includes theory of assessment, selecting and administering standardized assessments, assessment for program accountability, informal assessments, and program assessment planning. Trainers will provide hands-on activities for small groups.

The Case Management module will offer a comprehensive planning guide to developing a case management system within ABE programs.

Both modules will be ready for delivery by the end of the summer. Contact your regional PDC for scheduling. Other modules include Teaching Strategies for the Multi-level ESL Classroom, Cooperative Learning, and Math Problem Solving.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Project AXIS has been working behind the scenes in a communication-support role. Publications including *The ABLE Administrators Handbook*, *The Provider Directory*, and *Freebies for ABLE* were produced during 1996-97. A Web site for the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education will soon be announced. "ABLE Site" contains information on adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania, the entire *Provider Directory* in Web-

CONTINUED

accessible format, downloadable files of publications, PDE funding guidelines and forms, and much more.

BUILDING MORE COMMUNITIES

Building Communities for Learning (BCL) is a Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) community-based planning project designed to improve the delivery of adult learner services and, ultimately, adult learner outcomes. During 1996-97 four pilot sites were added: Carbon County, Northern Cambria County, the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Learning Collaborative, and Washington County. These sites, along with Fayette County, Lycoming County, and Wyoming Valley, established in 1995-96, are building comprehensive, coordinated delivery systems of adult learner services. As a result of their collaborative efforts, these communities are more effectively and efficiently serving the multiple needs of adult learners.

The three original pilot sites were matched with 1996-97 grantees to provide individualized technical assistance and support. PSCAL plans to add four new community-based planning sites during August and September 1997. For more information or to be placed on the BCL mailing list, contact Dr. Sheila Sherow at sms20@psu.edu or (814) 349-2444.

RESOURCE CENTER IMPROVES ACCESS

AdvancE's collection, files, and computers moved to a new location on the 11th floor of the Department of Education. The change combines all the collections housed in the Resource Center and provides improved access to the adult, vocational/School-to-Work, and basic education resources. The downlink site for teleconferences and an area for videoconferencing demonstrations are also available.

In support of the dissemination of 353 projects, AdvancE produced the *Projects Abstracts for the Fiscal Year 1995-96* and submitted all 1995-96 final reports and products to the U.S. Department of Education and to ERIC for review and possible inclusion in the ERIC database. The 1995-96 final reports are being cataloged and entered into the State Library database. To search the AdvancE collection check out Access Pennsylvania at http://accesspa.brodart.com.

RESEARCH YIELDING NEW KNOWLEDGE

Participants in **Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry** are busily analyzing data and writing up the findings from their inquiry projects. The topics represent a broad range of experiences and program types.

A literacy council coordinator used dialogue journals with three learner-tutor pairs to learn more about program participants' needs. A volunteer tutor is seeing how his students respond to language experience activities. A math teacher is learning more about how to help students succeed by involving them in developing a new math placement test and then collecting math writing samples and observations of them doing their work. He reports that this "has revealed a ton of information." A number of participants are either trying out a new approach and documenting how students respond to it or are working to understand better how students perceive and respond to current practices as a way to develop new approaches.

A number of PALPIN participants in the Southeast region have been working with colleagues to develop a program-wide inquiry project. Two such groups are investigating the challenges of meeting the literacy needs of ESL learners where listening and speaking have been the primary instructional emphasis. One group is developing a plan to restructure their program based on the inquiry work.

This brief summary illustrates ways in which inquiry is helping to improve individual practice and contribute to overall program improvement and knowledge generation for the field.

The **Pennsylvania Action Research Network** research team has logged hundreds of hours and miles to meet and exceed the project's goals. A brief summary: PA-ARN provided training and mentoring along with a training handbook. About 30 participants are expected to complete projects and monographs. The *Action Update* newsletter kept practitioners aware of both PA-ARN and PALPIN. A data bank is making every project accessible to anyone. Mentors from last year's project assisted this year. A panel of experts added objective input to the individual projects in two regions.

An internal evaluation of impact involving participants in PA-ARN's first year showed that some had continued with action research, some had not; yet, 94% said they "look at problems in a more systematic way as a result of action research." The same percent said they had "better problem solving strategies." A total of 63% had changed their program permanently and 63% said the institution's procedures had seen a lasting change as well. Their supervisors confirmed these statements in a second round of interviews.

Project leaders report that action research is beginning to show consistent strategies and patterns of findings, and that the field is already seeing some lasting impact—both in practice and institutional functions. With a growing base of knowledge, they hope that emerging patterns of successful strategies can be even better disseminated.

Quality Improvement Projects: Agencies/Contacts

Project EQUAL–Educational Quality for Adult Literacy: *Abt Associates/Judith Alamprese*

Regional Professional Development Centers: *Northwest Tri-County I.U. 5 / Richard Gacka, Bootsie Barbour; Central I.U. 10 / Edith Gordon, Gail Leightley; Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council / Donald Block, Karen Mundie, Rachel Zilcosky, Sue Snider; TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek, Brian Frey, Paula Smith; Lancaster Lebanon I.U. 13 / David Karl, Sandra Strunk, Ilsa Powell Diller; Mayor's Commission on Literacy / Rose Brandt, Diane Inverso*

AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Dept. of Education/Cheryl Harmon*

Western Pa. Adult Literacy Resource Center: *Pennsylvania Dept. of Education/Chris Kemp*

Building Communities for Learning: *Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy / Sheila M. Sherow*

Training Development Project: *TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center / Carol Molek*

Research & Development of Pennsylvania-Specific Adult Learner Competencies in Family, Work, and Community Contexts: *Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State University / Eunice N. Askov, Barbara Van Horn*

Technical Assistance for the Transmission of Data through Technology: *Center for Literacy, Inc. / JoAnn Weinberger*

Development of Criteria for Reporting Student Data: *Center for Literacy, Inc./Ashley Stoudt*

Professional Development Evaluation & Reporting System: *South-Central Professional Development Center / Brian Frey*

Program Improvement Plans & Needs Assessment: *Southeast Professional Development Center / Sandra Strunk*

ABLE Net: *Central-Northeast Professional Development Center / Debra Burrows*

Focus on Adaptation: *Royce & Royce / Sherry Royce*

Pennsylvania Action Research Network (PA-ARN): *Penn State University Monroeville / Allan Quigley*

Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network (PALPIN): *University of Pennsylvania / Alisa Belzer*

Statewide Staff Development on Adults with Learning Differences: *Center for Alternative Learning / Richard Cooper*

Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth: *Delaware Co. Literacy Council/Patricia Reitz Gaul*

AXIS—Adult education eXpress Intercommunications Support: *Lancaster-Lebanon I.U. 13 / Tina Reiff*

ONLINE ACCESS ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

ABLE Net developed and maintains a Web page (www.lhup.edu/~lhinman/home.htm) targeted to ABLE programs by providing links and information on technology funding, lesson plans, pending legislation, ESL, School-to-Work, training opportunities, workforce education, and more. During the past year, there has been a significant increase in the number of ABLE-affiliated individuals and programs that have secured online access. This will provide opportunities for faster, more efficient communication and access to information, which will help with the overall program improvement effort.

ADULT STUDENT COMPETENCIES: WORKPLACE, FAMILY, COMMUNITY

Not so many years ago, many adult educators considered the term *competency-based adult education* an oxymoron. Some adventurous programs began the daring journey into "life skills." Then the field began to talk about "meeting the needs of our adult students"—that our instructional and support programs should work with adult students to develop the skills/awarenesses/competencies required to make our clients effective workers, well-informed voters, and model parents who would help turn around the cycle of low literacy. It was a tall order.

Functional-context education. In a program based on a functional-context concept such as that of workplace competency, most instructional materials are drawn from actual on-the-job materials. Because of the emphasis on "context" and job-specific curricula, adult educators must improve their awareness of what goes on in the workplace so they can pull out concepts and information and use them as vehicles for teaching basic skills.

Customized materials must be developed instead of relying solely on published materials. The objectives of a company and its employees will determine whether or not job context is incorporated into basic-skills instruction.

Criterion-referenced measurement. Adult basic and literacy education programs initiating a system of competency-based instruction must develop an assessment program designed to evaluate the instructional goals and objectives of the new program. Criterion-referenced assessment, standardized or informal, measures an individual's competence against a predetermined standard of acceptable performance, rather than on how well adult learners perform in comparison to others.

The objectives of a company and its employees will determine whether or not job context is incorporated into basic-skills instruction.

Assessment must be frequent, providing learners with regular feedback, allowing them to advance when ready. Because competency-based assessment recognizes the significance of prior learning and experience (a must in adult education), many feel it is more appropriate for use with adults than norm-referenced standardized testing or a materials-based approach.

SCANS—adult learner competencies for the workplace. In 1990 the U.S. Secretary of Labor appointed a commission to look into charges that Americans are ill-equipped to succeed in the workforce. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) prepared a list of workforce competency skills and stressed the importance of the workplace and job-related tasks as the most effective learning environment.

Although some SCANS competencies are hands-on (selecting equipment and tools, troubleshooting equipment), most deal with attitudes, interpersonal skills, thinking, reasoning, etc. (One area even deals with competencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math.)

CASAS—Life Skills Competencies. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) was developed a number of years ago and has been revised to correlate with SCANS competencies.

CASAS is attractive to some ABLE programs because it provides a system of assessment upon which to determine the extent of adult learner competencies in life skills. As is true in many competency-based programs, adult educators who resist "teaching to the test" may need to make some philosophical adjustment if their instructional program is grounded on the CASAS competencies of Basic Communication, Consumer Economics, Community Resources, Health, Employment, Government and Law, Computation, Learning to Learn, and Independent Living.

Dangers of a list. SCANS, CASAS, and other programs which identify "necessary competencies" tend to lead to a trivialization of the individual nature of achievement. Individualization has always been a keystone of successful adult education instruction, and caution must be taken not to eliminate this individualization in attempts to systematize learning and learning goals.

Adults with learning problems may make attainment of a particular competency impossible in an adult education setting. We must not lose sight of the attitudes and techniques concerning individual abilities which Dr. Richard Cooper and others have worked so hard in conveying to us.

Lists have a way of being accepted as easily identifiable goals and objectives. Once they are accepted, lists are sometimes used as representing that which is best for all. Adult competencies, in their present context of welfare reform, economic development, etc., are across-the-board skills which employers would like to see. Adult educators must continue the practice of meeting the needs of individual students. This can be done if we use competency lists as guidelines rather than individual learning goals.❖

Legislative Flash!

According to JoAnn Weinberger, co-chair of the PAACE Legislative Committee, the state budget approved on May 6 includes a 3% increase in funding for Act 143, the State Adult Literacy Act. This was the amount requested by Governor Ridge.

A suggestion: contact your state legislators and thank them.❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze.

⇔ The March 1997 ***Missouri's Literacy Network News*** lists the results of a one-year research project dealing with the characteristics of ABE students. Some of the findings: Adult students who spend less than 10-12 hours per week studying spend half that time reviewing; 80 contact hours is the minimum time required for a significant learning gain; adult students who use support services are more likely to persist than those who do not; ABE students enrolled in small programs are more likely to persist than those in large programs; adult students enrolled in day classes are more likely to persist than students enrolled at night; moving from one-on-one instruction to small-group instruction is beneficial to students but requires more preparation time for instructors.

⇔ ***VINE***, the newsletter of the Pennsylvania Association for Volunteerism, in its Winter 1997 issue, has some interesting statistics about the nation's aging population. With the first wave of "baby boomers" entering their 50s, it is expected that during the next 50 years the 55+ age group will increase from the present level of 21% of the population to 33%. The article says boomers are not as interested in civic participation as were previous generations, and organizations that count on volunteers are already encountering problems getting volunteers. There are now nearly eight million fewer volunteers nationwide than in 1974. (It will be interesting to see if the Volunteer Summit held in April in Philadelphia will help counteract this trend.)

⇔ The newsletter of the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Winter 1997 issue, reported on a project at George Washington University which identified several principles allowing ESL educators to create an "ideal" environment for students. Included are: 1) Hold limited English-proficient students to the same high expectation of learning established for all students; 2) Develop full receptive and productive proficiencies in English, consistent with expectations for all students; 3) Enable limited-English students to meet performance standards in all content areas. For more information call GW University at (800) 925-3223. To get on the ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin*** mailing list write to DAEL, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-7240.

⇔ ***Read On*** is the newsletter of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia. The Winter 1997 issue featured an article titled "Staying Informed on Welfare Changes," which discussed the key provisions of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, which went into effect in Pennsylvania on March 3, 1997. The article suggests local programs read the state plan (it's not easy reading) and share it with staff members and community groups. For more information contact the Pennsylvania Dept. of Public Welfare, Rm. 431, Health and Welfare Bldg., Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675.

In the same issue MCOL Executive Director Rose Brandt notes some concerns expressed by literacy practitioners. In addition to a feeling of isolation ("our program is different from others"), they noted the social and political climate and the implications for program funding; how program participants will be able to continue their basic needs in these times of change and whether, after meeting these basic needs, there will be any time and energy left for education; and the need to adapt programs to address the changes in our society. Many programs are finding they are working with a different type of participant, one who is younger and is required to participate, and a number of programs are concerned that incidents of inappropriate or threatening behavior are becoming increasingly common.

⇔ The Winter 1997 issue of ***Developments***, the newsletter for ABLE programs in Washington state, has an article on teaching with themes in adult basic education. It suggests theme-based instruction increases learner motivation and retention, critical thinking, reading, writing, and research skills. Themes are identified by adult students and a catalog is made of what is known and not known about the subject. Activities are developed to research the topic and students hold a critique at the end of the project.

⇔ ***GED Items***, a free newsletter from the GED Testing Service, contains lots of information especially relevant to GED program instructors. In the January/February 1997 issue, GEDTS Interim Director Joan E. Auchter tells of a plan proposed this year in Massachusetts which provided for the administration of the seven-hour, 35-minute General Educational Development Test to every graduating senior in the state. In proposing the test administration, the Chair of the Massachusetts Board of Education said that using the GED test would put an end to "social promotions" and serve as a wake-up call to schools where student performance was consistently poor. After a significant public protest led by a Boston newspaper, the Board reversed its decision.

To get on the mailing list of *GED Items*, write GEDTS, One DuPont Circle NW, Ste. 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.❖

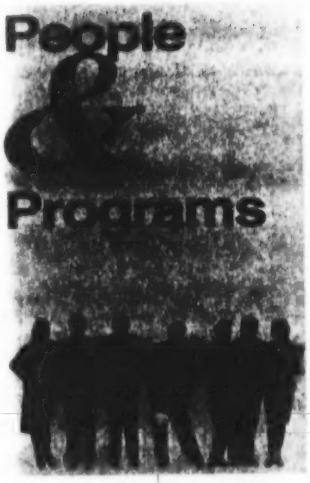
◆ **The Bridges/PREP employment readiness program** of the Lebanon County Housing and Redevelopment Authority has received an Award of Merit from the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. The Bridges/PREP program helps build self-esteem and assists participants to develop the necessary skills to join the work force or continue their education. Program director is **Jean Henry.**

◆ **Ron Ray,** formerly sales representative for Steck-Vaughn, writes us that, although he enjoyed seeing all of his adult education colleagues at the 1997 Midwinter Conference, he attended as a "civilian" due to a corporate decision which eliminated his and nine other sales rep positions. Ron says he appreciates the support of his Pennsylvania friends in adult education and hopes their paths will cross again soon.

◆ **Len Keller,** sales representative for EDS publishers, has established an award for nontraditional adult students at California (PA) University. Given in honor of his father, says Len, "The reason I've established the award is that I've been involved with adult education in Pennsylvania for many years and seen many adults who want to learn. I hope this will help a little bit."

◆ **Temple University** has established a new masters degree program in Adult and Organizational Development which will begin in fall, 1997. The program will be a combination of two previous programs and, according to the University, "will carry on a long tradition of preparing successful practitioners in the field."

Program director **Cheryl Boyer,** Assistant Professor at Temple Harrisburg, and Mel **Silberman,** Program Coordinator in Philadelphia, say they have fashioned a cutting-edge program which will feature practical skill development, relevant theory and research, and a faculty who are among the leading professionals in the field.❖



Two Pennsylvania Programs Selected for Nationwide Partnership

Literacy Partners, the parent organization of Literacy Volunteers of America in New York City, has announced the selection of two Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy education programs as members of the newly formed "What Works in Literacy Partnership."

Representatives from the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (Executive Director, Don Block) and the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia (Executive Director, JoAnn Weinberger) joined other Literacy Partnership members at a March conference in New York City to launch the program. Major themes were evaluation and assessment and advanced technologies and telecommunications.

The partnership is a national network of 16 outstanding programs from cities across the United States (Pennsylvania is the only state with two programs selected). Member programs will be linked by telecommunications, four national conferences, 15 national workshops, and publications to demonstrate that literacy programs are effective in helping adults learn.

The program is funded through a $1 million grant from the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund to invest in programs that enhance the cultural life of communities.❖

◀ From left: Jo Ann Weinberger and Ashley Stoudt from The Center for Literacy and Karen Mundie and Michele Joyce from the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

NIFL Campaign, from p.2

ing. It is also about opportunity and giving people the tools they need to make the most of their God-given potential. It is about preparing for the 21st century, when a full literate work force will be crucial to our continued strength as a nation."

NIFL has targeted 26 television stations and 63 radio stations throughout Pennsylvania, and the first mailing of public service announcements supporting the literacy public awareness campaign have been distributed, with others to follow.

Other Pennsylvanians on the NIFL state Media Task Force are **Autumn Gemberling,** Deputy Press Secretary to First Lady Michele Ridge; **Michele Haskins,** Pennsylvania Department of Education Press Office; **Cheryl Keenan,** Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education; **Linda McCrossan,** Director of the Lehigh Valley Adult Literacy Resource Center; **Susan Morgan,** Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association; **Ella Morin,** Chief of the Special Programs Division of the ABLE Bureau; **JoAnn Weinberger,** Executive Director of the Center for Literacy, Philadelphia; and **Nancy Woods,** Director of Adult Literacy Action, Penn State Beaver Campus.❖

the Buzz
JUNE 1997

It's a Date!

June 1997

NOTE: There will **not** be a Northeast Regional Literacy Conference in June 1997 due to the number of statewide conferences. For more information[contact your TLC representative or TLC President Pat Gaul at (610) 876-4811.

2-6 18th International Council for Distance Learning Conference, Penn State. Contact: (800) 778-8632.

5 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Contact Joanne Shane Plummer (717) 238-9026.

5 Teleconference: "Planning and Funding Technology for Adult Literacy," sponsored by PBS Adult Learning Satellite Service. Teleconference: "Changing Culture in the Workplace"; eight 60-minute programs. Contact: PBS, (800) 257-2578.

11-13 1997 Pennsylvania Rural Health Conference, State College. Contact: Lisa Davis, (814) 863-8214.

16-17 Inter-regional Conference on Teaching and Learning, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster. Contact: SEPDC, (717) 270-2935 or SCPDC, (717) 232-0568.

25-27 Pennsylvania Association for Volunteerism (PAV) Annual Statewide Conference; Williamsport, PA Contact: PAV, P.O. Box 385, Reading, PA 19607.

Corrections, ESL, New Teachers Institutes Approved

There will be three special professional development institutes (formerly called the Summer Institutes) held during the 1997-98 year. Exact details and dates were not available at press time, but interested ABLErs should contact their program directors and/or the sources noted here:

- **Corrections—possible dates: August 20-22; possible location: Millersville. Contact: William Mader, Bureau of Correction Education, (717) 783-9209.**
- **ESL—Contact: Manuel Gonzalez, Northampton Area Community College, (610) 861-5068.**
- **New Teachers Training and Orientation: first session to be held at the end of summer. Contact: Carol Molek, TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, (717) 248-4942.**❖

Literacy Summit in Camp Hill June 9

A forum on literacy to focus the attention of lawmakers, business leaders, educators, volunteer organizations and other groups on the challenge of improving literacy skills will be held at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center in Camp Hill on June 9, 1997 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The forum will be chaired by U.S. Congressmen William F. Goodling of York County and George W. Gekas of Dauphin County and is sponsored by the Public Forum Institute, a nonpartisan public policy group.

For more information contact Krista Donahue at the Institute (202) 547-2470.❖

August 1997

20 & 21 Teleconference: "Connect With English"; ESL series of 25 30-minute programs from PBS. Contact: (800) 257-2578.

September 1997

8 International Literacy Day

October 1997

Family Literacy Month

New Reader Conference, sponsored by Teachers of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC); date and place to be announced. Contact: Pat Gaul, TLC Chair, (610) 876-4811.

25-28 59th Annual Association for Continuing Higher Education Conference, Penn State. Theme: "Changing the Rules: Access and Accessibility in an Information Age."

November 1997

9-11 AAACE '97, National Conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, Cincinnati. Contact: Judy Scherrer (513) 887-5021.

February 1998

4-6 1998 Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Theme: Linking Learning to Life."

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